

Saddam threat to 'liberate' Palestine

Baker closes the door on further talks

By MARTIN FLETCHER, MICHAEL KNIPE AND JOHN HOLLAND

HARDENING attitudes were displayed by both sides in the Gulf confrontation yesterday.

James Baker, the American Secretary of State, said before flying to London last night that after trying for three weeks to meet Iraqi leaders, he was closing the door to further meetings after the one in Geneva on Wednesday. In Baghdad, President Saddam Hussein said Iraq had no intention of giving up Kuwait and was prepared for a long battle against the "tyranny represented by the United States".

Mr Baker was asked in an eve of departure television interview how America could refuse an Iraqi offer for Mr Baker to go on to Baghdad and still appear eager for peace. He pointed out that President Bush had offered 15 dates up to January 3 for such a meeting and said America would not be party to Iraqi manipulation of a very "real" deadline.

Mr Baker will confer today with Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, on the first day of his final tour of America's

main allies before January 15. The United Nations has authorized the use of force to drive Iraqi troops from Kuwait after this date.

Before leaving Mr Baker ruled out a trip to Baghdad to meet the Iraqi leader face to face following his meeting with Mr Aziz.

Shortly before Mr Baker set off from Washington, Saddam issued an intransigent warning that Iraq was ready for "the mother of all wars," to enforce its claim to the conquered territory. The belligerent nature of the Iraqi leader's speech increased fears of war and provoked David Levy, the Israeli foreign minister, to describe it as a "declaration of war".

With the deadline only days away, no signs of compromise, and international tension increasing, airlines began suspending flights to the Middle East.

An American official said Mr Baker was not coming to London "to learn anything or tell anything" but was simply "touching base with our closest ally" before his meeting in Geneva on Wednesday with Mr Aziz.

While in London Mr Baker will also meet Manfred Wörner, the secretary-general of Nato, and is expected to talk with Jacques Poos, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, which holds the presidency of the European Community.

On Tuesday, Mr Baker flies to Paris where he will meet with M Dumas, the French foreign minister. The predominant issue for their discussion will be the outcome of the controversial meeting between Michel Vauzelle, a senior French envoy, and Saddam in Baghdad on Saturday.

Mr Baker said: "We will not agree to anything that would constitute linkage of the Kuwait-Iraqi problem to any other problems."

Mr Baker conceded that his hand would be stronger if he entered the meeting with Mr Aziz with congressional approval for the use of force from next week.

Tom Foley, the House Speaker, and Robert Dole, the Senate's Republican minority leader, both said yesterday that they believed Mr Bush might now gain a narrow majority for such a resolution and that, said Mr Baker, would be "more helpful than no vote at all".

The House and the Senate intend to hold full debates in

the aftermath of Wednesday's meeting, but both Mr Foley and George Mitchell, the Senate Democratic leader, said they personally wanted more time for sanctions to work.

Richard Cheney, the defence secretary, warned the Iraqi leader yesterday not to make the mistake of assuming that Mr Bush needed congressional authority to go to war: "he does not".

The Iraqi leader said in his 25-minute televised speech that Iraq troops were prepared for a long battle against the "tyranny represented by the United States".

The speech was seen in Baghdad as an attempt to reinforce troop morale and make his opening posture, through Mr Aziz, in Geneva crystal clear.

Speaking on the 70th anniversary of the Iraqi army's founding Saddam pledged that the annexation of Kuwait was a "reality" and predicted that Palestine would be liberated, by force if necessary. He warned Iraqis to brace themselves for great sacrifices.

"The battle against the tyranny represented by the United States and the slogans of hegemony it is raising... is not expected to be a short one."

The Iraqi leader made no direct reference to the deadline but his statement indicated clearly that he had no plans to leave Kuwait.

Wearing military fatigues and a dark beret, he lauded the Iraqi army and "the heroes of stones," referring to Palestinians rioting against Israeli occupation. They had "transformed the possibility of ousting the invaders into a tangible and visible reality".

He praised the army for making the restoration of "Kuwait to its Iraqi motherland a reality, not a wish or a claim, that made it the 19th province of the treasured political map of Iraq for the present and future times".

The Iraqi leader opened his speech with a verse from the Koran, Islam's holy book, which said that combat was legitimate when it was pursued of a rightful cause.

Any Gulf settlement, he said, had to be linked to action on the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. "The Iraqi people must throw out the wicked armies from our holy land," the Iraqi leader said.

Israel prepares, page 5
Ronald Butt, page 8



Desert protection: Mr Major leaving Heathrow yesterday carrying his gas mask

Major off to steel the troops

From ROBIN CARLEY, INTAF

JOHN Major, the prime minister, flew to the Gulf last night to impress on British troops the importance of their mission if war breaks out with Iraq. He will tell them that they will be fighting a war to prevent future wars.

During talks with Arab leaders, Mr Major will personally reassure them that Britain remains totally committed to the use of force to evict Iraq, and to the full implementation of United Nations resolutions. He could be the last Western leader to visit the Middle East before an outbreak of war.

In talks with President Mubarak of Egypt and with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Mr Major will seek their views on what kind of security structure should be installed to keep the peace in the Middle East, after the resolution of the question of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait with or without the use of force.

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Abolition of poll tax ruled out before election

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE prime minister yesterday ruled out scrapping the poll tax as he predicted renewed economic growth and prosperity once Britain had overcome high inflation.

Although John Major said that interest rates were "overwhelmingly likely" to follow inflation downwards, he added that unemployment would continue to rise for some months.

With Treasury ministers meeting at Chevening in Kent next weekend to begin planning for the budget, Mr Major strongly hinted that there would be no changes to mortgage interest tax relief. Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, will review the economic forecasts amid deepening concern among Tory MPs about the government's economic difficulties. Both he and the prime minister have ruled out an early cut in interest rates, called for by opposition MPs and the Confederation of British Industry.

Mr Major ruled out abolishing the community charge during an interview on TV-am's *Sunday* programme in which he pledged that the government would

indicate before the general election what it planned to do about poll tax. Mr Major said that as the review was not yet complete it was impossible to say whether the changes would be introduced before polling day.

Since returning to the environment department as secretary of state, Michael Heseltine has repeatedly said that he would rule nothing out and nothing in while the review of the tax was under way.

However, Mr Major said that the situation would not arise where Mr Heseltine would recommend that the tax should be abolished. Asked whether the environment secretary might suggest abolition, Mr Major said: "No, I am sure he won't suggest that, the situation won't arise."

Mr Heseltine returns from a holiday in Kenya later this week. Meanwhile, the Treasury is strongly opposing proposals to spend a further £1 billion on reducing the next poll tax bills to an average below £400.

In his interview, Mr Major said that he did not believe the recession would be as serious as the one in the early 1980s. He thought that 1991 would lay the foundation "for the sort of growth and prosperity that people dreamed of some years ago but did not believe we would achieve".

Output would remain low for a few more months but interest rates would be likely to follow inflation down. "It is overwhelmingly likely that natural consequential events in the markets will enable us to reduce interest rates. I would not care to put a figure at precisely where it will be. But we are confident that inflation now is going to come

down. The signs I think are unmistakable."

Mr Major signalled a hard line towards Tories who believe that the pound should be devalued to allow a cut in interest rates. He said there would be no devaluation in any circumstances.

Turning to Europe, he said that he was "agnostic" towards a single European currency. "At the moment I certainly do not advocate a single currency to my party because I think it would be economically immensely damaging to Europe."

Leading article, page 9
Interest rates, page 17

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Written quotations available on request.

Land reform, page 7

Britons rescued from Mogadishu

By MICHAEL KNIPE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A GROUP of 20 Britons, including the British ambassador to Mogadishu and another diplomat, were airlifted to safety from the Somali capital yesterday by American helicopters as fierce fighting continued between rebels and government troops.

Ian McCluskey, the ambassador, David Gething, a second secretary, and the other Britons had taken refuge at the strongly fortified American embassy along with more than 200 other foreign residents from 14 different nations. Among them were the Soviet

ambassadors and 38 other Soviet citizens. Moscow said it had sent an evacuation plane to Somalia but it turned back when fighting at the airport prevented it from landing.

The evacuation was carried out by a force of 40 American marines from the amphibious ship, Guam, using two CH-53 Sea Stallion transport helicopters. The Trenton, another American amphibious vessel, is also stationed off the Somali coast.

The State Department in Washington emphasised that

the marines were not involved in the conflict. Their mission was solely to assist in the rapid and peaceful departure of Americans and other foreign nationals from Somalia, a spokesman said.

President Siad Barre is believed to be beleaguered at a government bunker near the airport. The rebel United Somali Congress (USC) said yesterday that it had launched "a final attack on the airport where Barre has taken refuge". Earlier the USC claimed that President Siad Barre had fled to Nairobi.



Lamont talks at Chevening with Major

Moscow enjoys a teach-yourself Christmas

From MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

MOSCOW families trudged through poorly-lit streets and deep snow yesterday evening to take part in traditional Christmas Eve services at churches across the capital. This year, the Orthodox Christmas has been designated a public holiday for the first time since 1917, thanks to a decision of the Russian parliament, and all Russia, it seems, is taking the opportunity to indulge in an orgy of nostalgia for Christmas past.

Throughout the capital, the new year trees set up for the secular holiday that for 74 years officially supplanted Christmas, have been left in place for the religious festival. Even the heavens this year preferred the old holiday to the new, sending two days of continuous snow to grace the

capital in time for Christmas, but too late for new year.

The tradition of pilgrimage was revived, and Orthodox pilgrims made their way on foot to the medieval Russian town of Novgorod for the first time since the revolution for last night's all-night service of vigil. In Moscow, Patriarch Aleksii officiated at the recently restored patriarchal church in the north of the city.

Unexpected institutions are commemorating the holiday. Two Communist party youth papers published excerpts from St Luke's account of the nativity at the top of their front pages. The trade union paper, *Trud*, published the text of the Moscow patriarch's Christmas message beneath the headline: "Love, peace and goodwill". Moscow's Lenin Library, the equivalent of the British

Library, has staged an exhibition of pre-revolutionary Christmas cards.

For those too young to have learnt the traditions, the official media have run something of a "teach yourself a Russian Christmas" campaign. All emphasise that Christmas is a family holiday when old and young gather under the same roof to celebrate a common festival. After going to church, people return home to a festive meal and distribute presents.

When the first star comes out on Christmas Eve, one Moscow paper told its readers, the faithful may break their 40-day fast and partake of the traditional meal: fish and a sweet dish made of grain and honey.

The first post-revolutionary Russian Christmas has, however, caused conflict. Although all other Orthodox areas of the country - the Ukraine, Belorussia and Georgia - followed Russia's lead in declaring today a public holiday, there are exceptions. The Tatar autonomous region in the Russian Federation decided that today should be a normal working day as Tatars are nominally Muslim. The Soviet armed forces also declared today a normal day. The army, a statement said, was a national body not subject to regional or religious holidays. Troops would be given an extra day's leave or extra pay.

In Yugoslavia, Serbia's opposition Democratic Party urged all Serbs to stop work today and said that the decision by the ruling communists to declare Christmas a working day was an "uncivilised act".

Gloom at shops

Poor Christmas trade is likely to force the failure of several retail groups hanging on in hope of a seasonal upsurge in trade. Page 17

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Britain's top policewoman opens sex discrimination case

By RONALD FAUX

ALISON Halford, an assistant chief constable with Merseyside police and Britain's most senior policewoman, opens her case at an industrial tribunal in Liverpool today alleging that she has been barred from promotion because she is a woman.

Miss Halford, aged 50, has brought the action against the home secretary, her chief constable, Northamptonshire police authority, and Sir Philip Myers, HM Inspector of Constabulary

(North West). She will be represented at the tribunal by lawyers appointed by the Equal Opportunities Commission, which is supporting her case and meeting her costs, expected to be in the region of £150,000.

Miss Halford is one of four assistant chief constables in the Merseyside force and is responsible for management, communications and legal services.

The case is expected to last three weeks. Alan Coventry, tribunal chairman, has insisted that the hearing should take place

at the Liverpool Industrial Tribunal in Union Court, which has room for only eight reporters, considerably fewer than are seeking to cover the case. According to tribunal staff, Mr Coventry has rejected suggestions that the hearing should be moved to a more spacious venue for fear of "turning the event into a circus".

The size of the tribunal room seems unlikely to lessen the keen public interest in Miss Halford. Campaigners for equal rights believe that if she wins, the case could have wider implications for

women seeking senior positions in management.

Last month Merseyside police authority decided to suspend Miss Halford on full pay after an investigation by the Police Complaints Authority into allegations against her of neglect of duty, discreditable conduct and falsehood. The suspension is to last until the action is dropped or until charges are heard by a disciplinary committee.

Miss Halford began her police career in London in 1962, telling friends at the time that she had

joined up "for the challenge". After four years as a WPC she was promoted to sergeant and gained wide experience ranging from criminal investigations to community relations. Her previous post was as a chief superintendent in the Metropolitan Police.

In 1983 she became the country's first woman assistant chief constable, being selected for the £40,000 job on Merseyside from a shortlist including three men. She is believed to have first raised eyebrows among her colleagues five years later when she wrote

about the "inability of some very senior men to cope with a woman of comparable rank".

After her decision to take her sex discrimination claim to an industrial tribunal, a newspaper reported that Miss Halford had allegedly stripped to her underwear and given an impromptu life-saving demonstration in a private swimming pool on Merseyside. Stories have also been written about her private life. She has always refused to comment apart from remarking that when taking the establish-

ment to a tribunal, "things get very tough and very dirty". After rumours within Merseyside police of an improper relationship between her and another woman member of the force, Miss Halford last week lodged a complaint against Jim Sharples, the chief constable, for neglect of duty. Her complaint to the police authority related to Mr Sharples' alleged refusal to hold an enquiry into the source of remarks attributed to an anonymous police spokesman in an article about the rumours.

MFI vows to rebuild stores destroyed in IRA attacks

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

MFI, one of Britain's biggest furniture retailers, is to rebuild two of its stores destroyed in an IRA onslaught on 14 commercial premises in Northern Ireland in the early hours of Saturday.

Derek Hunt, chairman of MFI, which was worst-hit in the attacks, said that its two stores in the province, at Newtownabbey, near Belfast, and at Sprucefield, near Lisburn, both of which were gutted by firebombs causing damage estimated at £6 million, would be rebuilt as soon as possible.

"In the fullness of time, we will certainly open them both," Mr Hunt said yesterday. "I would like to pick one of them, whichever one is less damaged, and get it back into business as quickly as we possibly can," he added.

MFI and the other companies affected, will submit to the Northern Ireland Office claims for compensation that are expected to run to tens of millions of pounds. The government accepts claims against damage of this kind caused by the IRA and other paramilitary groups, and provides compensation from the public purse.

Mr Hunt's comments came as economists warned that the fire bombings and a renewed campaign against commercial targets in the province by the IRA could reverse the steady improvement

in the retail sector over the past five years and the trend for major national stores to open premises in Belfast and elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

Graham Gudgeon, director of the independent Northern Ireland Economic Research Centre, said that the best hope for the province was that the bombings would not be followed up with further attacks and would be quickly forgotten.

"There's been quite a flow of national retail companies moving into Belfast, which has been part of a really noticeable improvement in confidence over the last five years," Dr Gudgeon said. "Widely publicised large-scale fire-bombings like this can only damage it."

Saturday's bombings, reminiscent of major campaigns by the Provisionals against shops and stores in the Seventies, designed to undermine confidence and a sense of normality, were aimed at 14 shops in seven locations, destroying five of them, badly damaging five others and causing damage to stock in two.

Among the targets were two of the most impressive shopping centres in the province, at Sprucefield, where three of the four major stores were destroyed, and at the new Castlecourt Centre, in Belfast, where Laura Ashley and Principles for Men suffered damage to stock. Debenhams, among the latest arrivals in Northern Ireland and the so-called anchor store at the complex, suffered scorching and water damage.

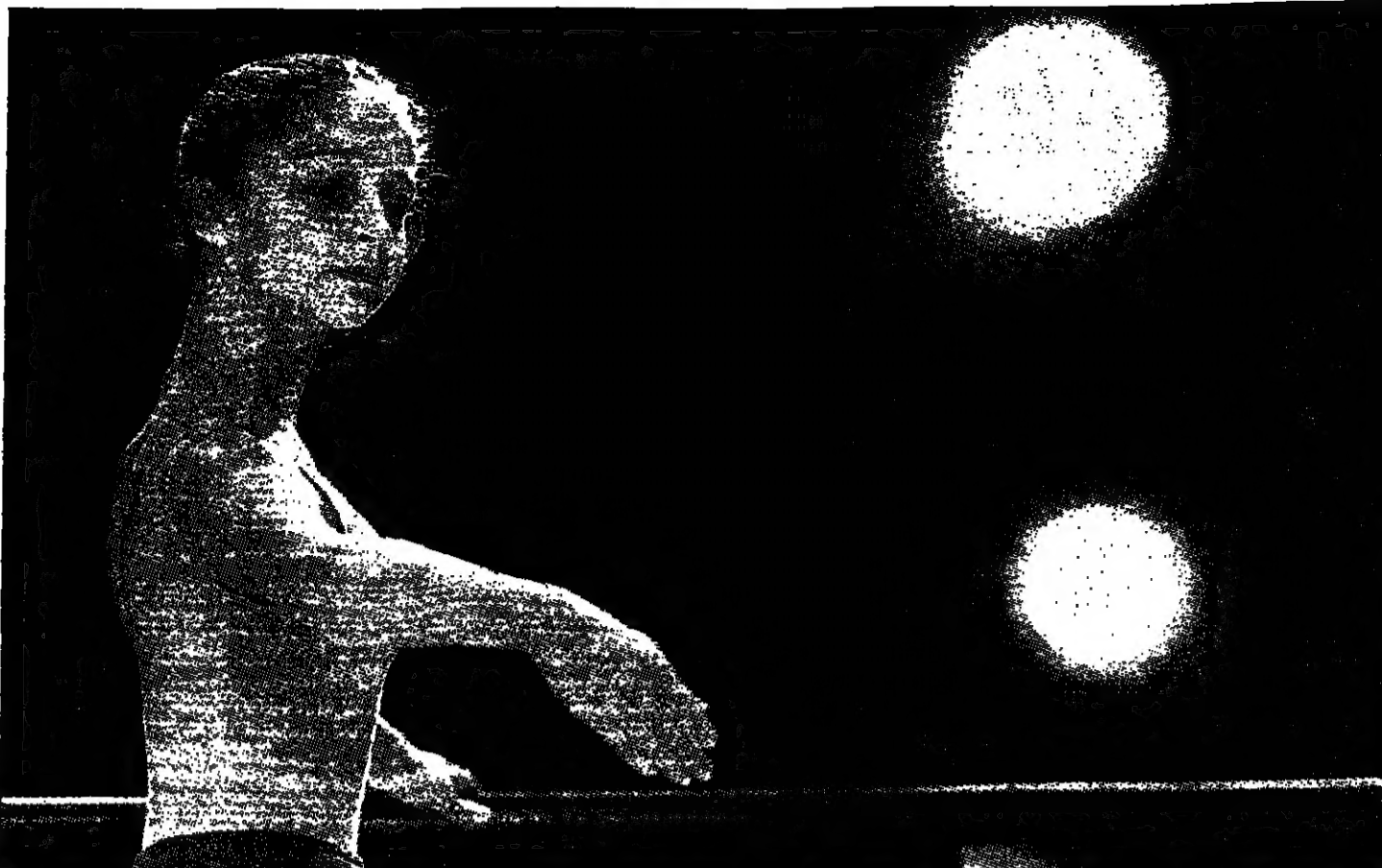
Ministers, expressing outrage at the attacks, said that they destroyed the very jobs and investment for which Sinn Féin, the IRA's political wing, campaigns.

The IRA perfected small-scale incendiary devices in the Seventies, but discontinued its commercial campaign in the Eighties, partly because the attacks were becoming unpopular with its own supporters. In a statement to a local radio station at the weekend, the IRA gave no explanation of why the shop bombings had been carried out, nor any indication of whether it intends to carry out more. Time will tell whether the attacks represent the start of a new onslaught against Northern Ireland's fragile economy or are perhaps a one-off show of force against a relatively quiet Christmas, and, in the IRA's terms, a not particularly successful 1990.

A 26-year-old Roman Catholic man from Magheralin, Co Down, became the first victim of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland this year when he was killed by suspected Loyalist gunmen on Saturday night.

Gervaise Lynch, a bachelor who worked as a machine operator, was shot at least six times in the living room of his parents' bungalow by assailants who entered through the unlocked back door.

Mr Lynch was found by his parents at about 8.20pm after they returned from evening mass.



Poised for success: Clair Thomas, aged 16, of Byfleet, Surrey, the only British girl to reach the final 15 in the Royal Academy of Dancing's annual classical ballet awards for teenagers.

practising yesterday for last night's final at the London Palladium. Five British girls were among this year's record total of 42 dancers from throughout the world competing for £6,500

worth of prizes in the Digital Genée awards as well as the gold, silver and bronze medals. The dancers spent last week receiving intensive tuition at the academy

Guide book leads the visitor astray

By LIN JENKINS

THERE is little about Keynasham, on the outskirts of Bristol, to put it on the map or to excite the locals, let alone the historians. That is unless one believes the local council's view in its new guide.

To the astonishment of the 22,000 residents, authors of the guide have elevated Keynasham to a place of historical interest by wrongly stating that the Duke of Monmouth was hanged outside a local public house after his defeat at Sedgemoor. He was in fact beheaded in the Tower of London.

The guide also boasts of amenities in the town which are no more than memories in the minds of the older residents. The cinema, which, according to *Street Maps of Towns and Villages in the Wansdyke district of Avon*, is still showing the latest box office hits, long ago gave way to the demand for bingo.

The Midland railway line with a regular service bisecting the suburb, mentioned in the guide, fell silent under the Beeching axe in the early Sixties. Visitors will be hard pressed to follow the recommendation to browse round the market; it disappeared under a housing complex some years ago.

Howard Massey of the Keynasham civic society is particularly upset about the historical inaccuracies. He dismisses as nonsense the guide's insistence that King Ethelred was buried in Keynasham.

Local people who have complained to the council claim to have found 25 errors in the guide. Wansdyke district council said the errors were spotted after an initial print run of 4,000, and that the guide, published by a firm in Macclesfield, had been withdrawn.

MPs threaten litigation over TV body's impartiality code

By JOHN LEWIS

RIGHT-WING politicians and Tory evangelists are threatening to take the new Independent Television Commission (ITC) to court if it fails to alter its draft codes on impartiality and religious broadcasting.

The move threatens to start a litigation war over those issues. The government was warned about that possibility during the passage of the broadcasting bill.

The politicians claim that the ITC, which took over from the IBA this month, is flouting the Broadcasting Act by being too restrictive on religious broadcasting and by making the impartiality

rules more open to abuse than they are at present. Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, is being asked to intervene to persuade the ITC to reconsider.

Lord Orr-Ewing, the Tory right-wing peer who raised the two issues in the Lords, said: "We are reluctant to go to a judicial review, but if they say they are going to go ahead we shall have no alternative, both on religious and impartiality points."

The ITC is due to produce its final version of the codes later this month and a spokeswoman expressed surprise that the critics could not wait, but Lord Orr-

Ewing and his colleagues appear to be convinced that the die is already cast.

In a submission to the ITC on impartiality, Lord Orr-Ewing and Lord Wynt of Wessford, an independent peer, say the code breaks a commitment made during the broadcasting bill to broaden the impartiality test so that it is not applied only to "current political and industrial controversy". They say the code's wording restores precisely this.

They also claim that controversial personal-view programmes by left or rightwingers will not have to be balanced promptly, as MPs and peers were promised. Broadcasters such as Liz Forgan, Channel 4 director of programmes, are accused of influencing the code by a backdoor strategy.

"Recognising that it was probably too late to prevent the law being tightened, this broadcaster recommended concentrating attention on the drafting of the code. Clearly this has been done with the result that, if it is approved, it will allow more licence for partial coverage of controversial issues than ever before," say the peers. They warn that the code will be open "to repeated legal challenge".

In a separate submission on religious broadcasting, Lord Orr-Ewing and Michael Alison, MP, a former health minister and PPS to Mrs Thatcher who speaks for the church commissioners in the Commons, allege that the ITC code is far too restrictive in what it proposes and illegal.

They claim that, as it stands, the code will stop religious organisations advertising follow-up material for programmes just shown, as the BBC and ITV do.

Councils seek crime prevention role

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE government is being urged to give district councils in England and Wales the responsibility for co-ordinating crime prevention.

The call was reinforced by the recent publication of crime figures showing one of the worst increases on record. Reported crime rose by 16 per cent in the third quarter of 1990, the second steepest rise since records began. The figures are useful ammunition for the Conservative-controlled Association of District Councils, which plans to launch a campaign against crime.

The association wants the 333 authorities it represents to be given the leading role in crime prevention. The debate has been complicated by the police insisting

they would do the job if they had more resources, while county and district councils argued about which one should be responsible.

Most of the 47 English and Welsh county councils are also police authorities, and have argued that they should lead crime prevention campaigns. Recent surveys have, however, found that the public believes that crime prevention should be a community-based activity, which has led district councils to insist that they take the lead.

In a report, the association says that, as the tier of local government responsible for housing, planning and leisure, district councils can tackle the causes as well as the effects of crime.

New group aims at Rushdie settlement

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A MODERATE Muslim organisation was launched yesterday to isolate the financial fringe among Britain's 1.5 million Muslims and resolve the Salman Rushdie issue.

The much-respected Islamic scholar Zaki Badawi, principal of the Muslim College in London, who has condemned Mr Rushdie's alleged blasphemy but deplored his persecution, said that he was determined to rally moderate opinion. However, those aims were quickly inhibited by the son of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, who said in Tehran that Britain would face unspecified reprisals unless it freed an Iranian charged with arson during a protest against Salman Rushdie's book *The Satanic Verses*.

The warning by Hojatoleslam Ahmad Khomeini preceded the trial today of Mehdi Karubi, an Iranian arrested in Manchester in December and accused of setting fire to a bookshop selling the novel.

Mr Khomeini issued the warning while visiting members of Mr Karubi's family camped outside the British embassy in the Iranian capital. He said his father's death sentence against Mr Rushdie should be executed in accordance with divine laws. Later the family agreed to end their protest after a request by the parliamentary speaker, Mahdi Karubi.

Mr Rushdie said in a phone-in programme, on Bradford City Radio yesterday that Muslims would be committing a crime against God if they tried to kill him. Insisting that he had returned to the Islamic faith, he gave a message to any Muslim trying to take his life. "When a Muslim murders another Muslim it is not a religious act, it's a murder. It's not my immortal soul that would be in danger, it's his."

Mr Rushdie said he was not prepared to withdraw his book. "I think I have done a great deal, stopping the publication of the paperback edition and saying I wouldn't permit further translations."

He welcomed a radio station poll which claimed that 90 per cent of callers felt he should be forgiven. But Mr Rushdie was criticised by leaders representing the city's 75,000 Muslims. Sher Azam, president of Bradford Council for Mosques, said Mr Rushdie had missed a golden opportunity to withdraw the book.

Help for redundant executives hit by 'why me?' blow

By RAY CLANCY

THOUSANDS of executives and businessmen are turning to helpline and benevolent funds for assistance as they face the prospect of being unable to find a new job as the recession deepens.

Advertising is suffering badly, with about 2,000 of the 15,500 employed in the industry either out of work or looking for new jobs. A helpline set up by the National Advertising Benevolent Society has been inundated with calls and the organisation has seen a large increase in the number of people now seeking advice.

Just before Christmas the usual number of 30 calls a week rose to almost 100.

"It has been quite dramatic. People are particularly worried about redundancy. They are the sort of creative people who are not used to looking for jobs. Normally, they would take their portfolio along and be hired on the spot. All that has changed

now," said Denise Larkin, director of the society.

"They suffer from shock, and financial help is not necessarily what is needed. We make sure they get the best possible redundancy deal and take it from there," she said.

The society has six full-time

welfare counsellors and can draw upon a team of doctors and psychotherapists. They help people get over the shock of being made redundant, sort out any immediate financial problems and then get down to the business of finding a new job. That can involve helping an executive

prepare a curriculum vitae or advising on interview technique.

Executives are usually hit by the "why me?" syndrome. No job is safe and those who are in work are suffering double stress because they are working harder than ever and worrying about their future. Firms have frozen pay, some have imposed pay cuts and the usual Christmas bonus did not materialise for many staff.

Newspapers paint a grim picture. Large advertising agencies such as Saatchi and Saatchi and D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles have all shed staff. Other smaller agencies have gone out of business. The car industry is losing jobs fast. City firms have cut back, and even the Stock Exchange has trimmed jobs.

All professions are now being affected, according to the consultants Sanders and Sidney, which has found a sharp increase in the number of executives from the manufacturing industry seeking help.

"There has been a steady

increase in redundancy across the country, covering a wide range of jobs, from those in the City to personnel and marketing executives in the manufacturing industry, to solicitors and accountants, which represents a new area," said Derek Edwards, operations director of Sanders and Sidney.

The consultancy advises companies who are about to make a group of people redundant in the early stages of the process. "It is not a good idea to make someone redundant on a Friday when he has the weekend ahead to stew over it," said Mr Edwards.

Counselling is offered on an individual and group basis. Everything is appraised, strengths and weaknesses, good points and bad. The consultancy works out a flexible programme to suit an individual's needs, and office space and secretarial support are provided for those actively seeking a new job.



Advice at hand: Denise Larkin (centre) with helpline staff

Surgeons proposing HIV test

Patients facing hospital operations may be asked to be tested for HIV, the virus that causes Aids, under guidelines to be published this week.

The British Orthopaedic Association, representing surgeons who perform thousands of operations a year, says that patients who refuse the blood test may be treated as high-risk cases. Theatre staff would then take extra precautions against HIV infection. The Royal College of Surgeons of England is to publish its guidelines, believed to be similar, on Thursday.

Train services hit

Thousands of Scottish rail travellers face disruption today because of a 24-hour strike by conductors at Queen Street station in Glasgow. The staff, members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers' Union, are taking action over the debarring of five members from becoming drivers because of previous drink-related disciplinary offences at work. About half the trains between Queen Street and Edinburgh and Aberdeen will be cancelled.

16-sided house

The National Trust has bought a 16-sided house built in 1798. The A La Ronde house, at Exmouth, Devon, was built by Jane and Mary Parminter, spinster cousins who said that it should pass to succeeding generations through the female line. The trust has paid £750,000 for the house and will launch an appeal on Friday for contributions towards the cost of buying and maintaining it.

WPC fired at

A policewoman narrowly escaped death early yesterday when an armed man shot at her from close range. WPC Jackie Holdsworth saw the man acting suspiciously in the early hours at Ruislip Road, Greenford, west London, and gave chase across a park. The man turned and fired at WPC Holdsworth with a pistol, missing her, before escaping to the Academy Gardens housing estate. Police searched the estate, but could not find the man.

Graves found

Archaeologists in Winchester have discovered hundreds of long-forgotten graves, dating from the 14th century and earlier, in the grounds of the cathedral. The graves, found 3ft underground, may force changes in plans for a £1 million visitor centre. The centre, planned for the cathedral's 900th anniversary in two years' time, may now be built on a platform to protect the remains. Archaeologists believe the graves could run into thousands.

Death enquiry

A naked young woman, who may have frozen to death in a city park, was waiting for a heart and lung transplant, her family said yesterday. Barbara Lockey, aged 24, of West Denton, was found curled up on the grass with her clothes folded beside her on the Town Moor, Newcastle upon Tyne. An investigation was launched by police on Friday. A relative, Ron Lockey, said: "We have not got a clue how this happened, we are dumbfounded."

Ship to shore

Police are investigating the theft of a two-tonne bronze propeller worth £2,000 from a shipwreck five miles off Norfolk. The wreck belongs to the British Sub Aqua Club which wanted the 12ft propeller as a club trophy. The club, which is "extremely miffed" at the theft, said that explosives and lifting gear would have been needed to remove the propeller.

Dogs attack police

Four police officers were taken to hospital after being set upon by an alsatian and two Rotweilers outside a house in Newton Abbot, Devon, yesterday. One received stitches while his colleagues escaped with minor injuries.

CORRECTION

A Reuter news item published on December 21 incorrectly stated that the National League for Democracy had been deregistered by the government of Burma. The news agency made an error in the translation of a radio broadcast.

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Honda to counter quota threat with imports from US

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

HONDA is to escape the threat of European Community quotas on imports of Japanese cars by bringing a model made in the United States to Britain this year.

The Honda Accord estate arrives in March as the first Japanese-badged car built in the US to be exported to Europe. The cars will not be counted as Japanese exports because they are recognised as fully fledged American products by the US authorities.

While only 2,000 cars will come in this year from the Marysville plant in Ohio, the trickle could turn to a flood as the Japanese increase output in the US and seek a bigger share of the European market.

Concern that the EC could force restrictions on Japanese exports led to the establishment of three big car plants in Britain by Nissan, Toyota and Honda, which will be making a total of 500,000 cars a year

by the end of the decade, about half for export. They will now be supplemented by the US cars. Europe could prove an important outlet as the US market slumps. Sales of new cars there are expected to have fallen about 4 per cent in 1990.

Motor industry analysts, however, see little room for new imports to Britain, which has seen a drop in sales of 12-14 per cent in 1990. Further falls are expected next year.

One executive of a British car company, who would not be named, said: "We have enough problems fighting the Japanese on our own doorstep without having any extra problems heaped upon us from other sources."

The Honda Accord symbolises the huge growth of Japanese car manufacturers in the US. It has been the best selling car in America for the past two years and Japanese models have taken more than a third of sales. While America's traditional Big Three car makers, General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, have been forced into cutbacks and plant closures, Japanese-owned factories are booming.

Honda's Marysville plant is working overtime to increase annual capacity from 360,000 cars to more than 379,000 and expects a steady increase in exports. The company wants to send 5,000 Accord estates to Europe this year. It is thought to be considering adding a second Accord model to its US exports to Europe, with Britain again seen as an important market.

The Accord estate was designed by Honda in America specifically for US and European buyers. With a 2.2 litre

engine, the family model is likely to cost about £17,000. That will pitch the car against key models from British-based companies, such as Ford Sierra estates, Vauxhall Carlton estates and the Rover 800 hatchbacks.

The challenge comes at a difficult time for the British motor industry with sales falling, particularly in the executive and luxury car sector. Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders expected tomorrow will show sales in 1990 just managed to exceed two million after some last-minute registrations by manufacturers before the new year. That is well below the record 2.3 million sales of 1990, and 1991 may see sales slump further to 1.9 million.

Some companies have suffered more than others. Importers of Japanese cars have beaten the trend with firms such as Honda and Mitsubishi both achieving larger sales in 1990. However, Ford, the market leader, suffered a fall of more than 100,000 cars.

There was little cheer for the company at Jaguar, bought by Ford in November 1989 for £1.5 billion. Jaguar, the success story of the 1980s, suffered a decline in sales in Britain of about 25 per cent and output could drop from 45,000 cars to 42,000 as the Coventry firm battles against the recession, particularly among companies who are normally its strongest customers.

Nine out of 10 Jaguars are sold to company fleets. Analysts believe that Jaguar's financial losses could double from £43.9 million to £80-£100 million as a result.

Score-card check on babies' health

By THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A SIMPLE score-card system to help parents, doctors, and health visitors quickly to identify symptoms of illness in infants is launched today.

Babies are more at risk of developing a potentially serious condition during the first six months of life than at any other time during childhood, but are also prone to many minor complaints. Difficulties in distinguishing between important and trivial symptoms mean that while many babies are admitted to hospital unnecessarily, many others are not treated promptly.

The baby check system itemises 19 symptoms or signs of illness - including vomiting, fluid intake, drowsiness, unusual crying, breathing, wheezing and rectal temperature - each with a score. The chance of the infant being seriously ill increases with the cumulative score.

The method is not designed specifically to help prevent cot deaths, but its development has been funded with £115,000 from the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, the leading cot-death research charity.

Dr Colin Morley, a consultant paediatrician at Addenbrooke's hospital, Cambridge, who devised the system, said

yesterday: "This should improve the detection of serious illness in small babies and could reduce the number of those admitted to hospital with mild infections without putting them at increased risk." In trials, 94 per cent of GPs thought the system was useful for assessing illness in babies, and 96 per cent of mothers using it without supervision said they would recommend it.

The system is being marketed in two versions by the Child Growth Foundation, a charity based at 2 Mayfield Avenue, London W4 1PW. The one for parents costs £8.95, and the other, for health professionals, is £1.50.

A discovery that the contraceptive pill can help infertile women to have a baby has been made by specialists at a London hospital. Ten out of 17 women given the pill for some weeks before undergoing in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment have become pregnant, a much higher success rate than usually achieved.

Only two out of 13 other women who did not take the pill conceived during a study of the new approach at the private Cromwell hospital in west London.

Boarding pupils get sex abuse helpline

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

SEXUALLY-abused children in independent boarding schools will be able to use a confidential telephone helpline in an experimental scheme. Parents will also be advised to check out schools thoroughly before enrolling their children.

The schools will be asked to display the telephone number of the service which will be operated by Childline, the counselling organisation. The £30,000 six-month experiment will get £25,000 from the education department and £5,000 from the Independent Schools Joint Council.

The helpline has been set up after the jailing of the owner and a teacher at Crookham Court school, Berkshire, for sexual offences. The school was not a member of the recognised associations belonging to the council.

Arthur Hearden, secretary of the council, which represents 1,400 of the 2,500 independent schools, said: "We are confident of our schools which have sophisticated pastoral systems but if there is a single case, we are worried. It is important to have every avenue for children to unburden themselves. The experimental period will let us see the scale of the problem."

The helpline is one of several measures being supported by the government to control privately-owned schools which have no inspection system. From October, social services will have powers to check private boarding schools and the school inspectors plan to visit all of them at least once every five years.

The education department said private boarding schools were often used by service families with their parents abroad and the helpline would provide some safeguard.

Education, pages 22, 23

Birmingham Six may see scientific evidence dropped

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SIR Allan Green, QC, the director of public prosecutions, may drop the forensic science evidence against the Birmingham Six when the case goes to the Court of Appeal if scientists can agree a statement on the validity of tests for traces of explosives.

The possibility of a formula for a "united approach" on the evidence was suggested last month by Graham Boul, senior counsel for the DPP, during a preliminary hearing before the full appeal next month. He suggested all parties in the case might come together to draw up a formula for the agreement of the court.

Mr Boul spoke against the background of a report published by the forensic science service last September which found that too much emphasis had been placed on the forensic science tests in the past and suggested no one could be sure beyond reasonable doubt that any of the six had handled explosives.

If the formula agreed that

the evidence was highly unreliable, the law lords would almost certainly accept a recommendation to discard it. Yesterday a spokesman for the DPP would only say that Sir Allan still planned to ask the court to look at all the evidence in the original case.

Forensic science evidence was based on tests carried out in 1974 by Dr Frank Skuse using an analysis for nitroglycerine that suggested two of the six had traces of explosive on their hands. A laboratory test suggested one man might have handled nitroglycerine.

The forensic science evidence was considered vital in the original trial in 1975 but given less significance by the appeal court when the men first appealed. In the last appeal, in 1987, the court laid emphasis on the laboratory test and also pointed to other evidence in the original trial.

The removal of forensic science evidence leaves the question of confessions made by four of the men and other

background material produced at the original trial. New tests on police documents are known to have raised questions about possible alterations to police notebooks and statements.

A leading churchman yesterday called on Sir Allan to announce that he was not contesting the appeal against conviction of the Birmingham Six.

The Most Rev Thomas Winning, Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow, said he believed that the men were innocent. Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Sunday programme, he said: "I believe the director of public prosecutions should, with the humility he showed in the case of the Guildford Four, announce he is not contesting this appeal."

"I think the evidence that has been submitted recently is so overwhelming - or at least brings into grave doubt the guilt of these men - that the case has been falling apart over the months."

AGENDA

The week ahead

Today
The Commons returns after Christmas recess. Sex discrimination tribunal case brought by Alison Halford, assistant chief constable, opens in Liverpool. British Rail accused of safety deficiencies after Clapham rail crash. South Western magistrates' court, London.

Tomorrow
Confederation of British Industry launches eastern Europe initiative, London. RNLI and Volvo launch lifeboat house appeal at Boat Show, London.

Wednesday
Crafts dog show opens at National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Public Lending Rights list of top authors published.

Thursday
Channel tunnel contractors prosecuted over death of worker. Dover magistrates' court.

Friday
Commons' science committee report on science and Europe published.

Saturday
Stop War in the Gulf demonstration. Hyde Park.

£400m racket of building plant theft

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

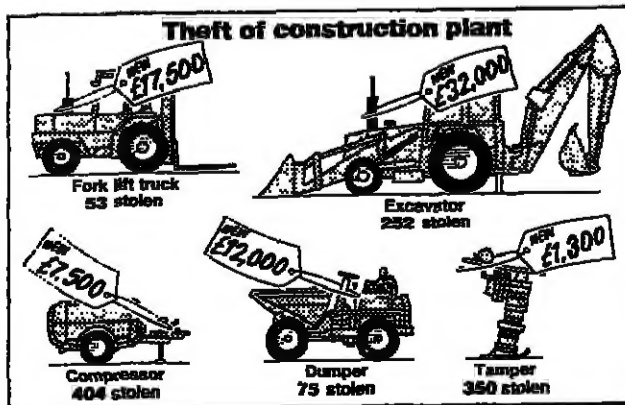
NO ONE took much notice of the articulated lorry pulling out of a Home Counties building site on a Sunday afternoon loaded with JCB excavators. The absence of the machines, worth more than £60,000, did not register until the site reopened next day.

By then, the lorry and its cargo were on a ferry heading for waiting buyers abroad. The thieves' plan would have succeeded if an alert local constable had not called Scotland Yard's stolen car squad and launched an all-ports alert.

The recovery of the diggers was a singular triumph. The construction industry loses annually plant worth £400 million. Millions of pounds more go in wasted time.

The thefts are highly profitable and well-organised. Ireland is a main conduit for plant sent to the United States, and Scotland Yard believes that the IRA is either involved or receiving protection money for plant in transit across the Ulster border.

Plant is defined as equipment that is wheeled or can be moved only with wheels. Losses have included huge mobile cranes worth £500,000, motorway excavators capable of lifting a ton of



soil, and three dustcarts belonging to the London borough of Richmond.

In 1989, Malcolm Finch, custodian of a special register compiled by the stolen car squad, recorded 3,571 items of stolen plant, including 19 cranes, 2,120 generators and 298 jack-hammers. He estimates that the register covers as little as 5 per cent of thefts because many police do not pass on details or do not classify items properly.

The thieves service a flourishing market at home and abroad. Mr Finch, a former detective and a member of a Home Office working party on the thefts, said: "The only people who want the plant is the construction industry it-

self and so it is recycled. It seems the smaller people are living off the backs of the bigger ones." The thieves work to order, scouting sites for plant they want and organising its removal, often at weekends.

The construction industry hires 60 per cent of plant it needs and bears the cost of losses under insurance. Hire companies in financial trouble have been known to steal back their own equipment and then demand compensation.

John Clarke, managing director of Avon Lippitt Hobbs, civil engineers, said that plant might be stolen by subcontractors to start up in business or by employees. A recent check on London sites uncovered

23 pieces of plant that had been reported stolen.

Other stolen equipment is going to the Lebanon, the Canaries, Mediterranean nations and now to the expanding east European countries.

Police investigating the disappearance of 26 pieces of road-surfacing machinery taken from London and Essex discovered 11 items in Greece, shipped out of Britain at weekends to Italy and then eastwards early the next week.

The industry's defences are growing. Mr Clarke has organised a computer bank for construction companies that keeps track of plant and records reports of thefts so that spot checks can be carried out on sites. Companies are now using security locks on plant.

The police are asking companies to register plant with the vehicle licensing authority at Swansea, and the new version of the Police National Computer will also hold data.

An important advance would be agreement on standard identification for plant, which does not bear the sort of chassis or engine numbers stamped on cars. Attempts to introduce a 17-digit system are dogged by reluctance from British manufacturers arguing about cost and by international disagreements.

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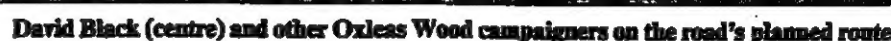
Last gasp in fight to save city's woodland lung

An enquiry tomorrow will discuss a road through London's last big tract of ancient woodland. Plans to save it have been rejected because the government puts no cash value on damaged environmental features, says Michael McCarthy, who also reports, right, on moves to reverse that

The main casualties of the subsidy cuts, the New Zealanders say, have been suppliers, processors, exporters and others in the agricultural service sector, who had been pocketing most of the benefits.

They proposed 1,200-metre-long tunnels to save the woods: a bored tunnel which would have saved them completely, for an extra £32 million.

The fate of Oxley woodlands has aroused strong feeling because they are a rare remnant of the forest that covered all of Britain after the ice age. Dave Black, a PARC committee member, asked: "How can Britain criticise the Brazilians for cutting down the rainforest when our own primeval forest is being destroyed by the government?"



By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

that time used to stabilise and strengthen the foundations had reacted with the soil, forming a crystal compound that expanded rapidly as it absorbed water. Part of the road had to be dug up and relaid at an additional cost of £1 million, and the transport department predicts that the motorway's 40-year design life will be reduced by 10 per cent.

● British Rail should consider building an extra Channel tunnel rail link between Folkestone and Reading that bypasses London, according to a report published today by the Western Region Transport Users' Consultative Committee.

The route was first suggested in the Thirties but it was not until the Sixties that planning began, with the first public enquiry taking place in 1973. It was one of a series of hearings that culminated in an epic legal battle mounted by local objectors, in which the Court of Appeal finally found in favour of the transport department in 1985.

The opening of the ill-fated M40 extension

A map showing the proposed M40 extension route. The route starts at Birmingham, goes south through Coventry (junction with M6), Banbury (junction with M42), Cheltenham (junction with M1), and Oxford (junction with M42 and A40). The extension continues south from Oxford towards High Wycombe (junction with M25). The A34 is also shown near Oxford.

Diagram illustrating the layers of a road construction project:

- Surfacing 1½ in hot rolled asphalt
- 27/in dense bitumen macadam
- Roadbase 9 in continuously reinforced concrete
- Sub-base 6 in cement bound material
- Capping layer 13 in crushed rock
- 8½ in stabilised material
- Crystals have formed here causing the road to bulge



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By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Evgeni Bareev increased his hold on the lead with a whirlwind attack against the Hungarian world championship candidate Gyuula Sax. The full results were: King (England) beat Larsen (Denmark), 73 moves, English Opening; Speelman (England) beat Kosten (England), 41 moves, King's Indian; Bareev (USSR) beat Sax (Hungary), 30 moves, Nimzo-Indian; Chandler (England) beat Olafsson (Iceland), 35 moves, Ruy Lopez. The scores after 8 rounds are: Bareev, 6; Larsen and Sax, 4½; Chandler, 4; Speelman and Olafsson, 3½; King and Kosten, 3.

In the Foreign & Colonial challengers section, the winner of which qualifies for next year's grandmaster group, the lead is shared, with one round to go, between Stuart Conquest (Hastings), Joe Gallagher (Wimbledon), Evgeni Vladimirov, Alexei Suetin and Mikhail Tseitlin (all Moscow).

The Foreign & Colonial Grandmaster group at Hastings is category 14 on the

These are the moves for Murray Chandler's win from round eight against Helgi Olafsson:

Chandler (White)		Olafsson (Black)	
White	Black	White	Black
1 e4	e5	19 Rxe6	Rb8
2 Nf3	Nc6	20 Re4	c5
3 Bb5	a6	21 h3	Bh5
4 Bg4	Nf6	22 Ra7	Nc7
5 0-0	Be7	23 e6	Bf6
6 Qe2	b5	24 e7	Re8

Daniel King, of London, scored his first win in a long strategic battle against the Danish veteran and three-times world championship semi-finalist Bent Larsen. Meanwhile, the 24-year-old Soviet Olympic gold medallist

Diagram 1 shows the final positions of the pieces on the chessboard. The board is an 8x8 grid with columns labeled a-h and rows labeled 1-8. White pieces are on g1, e1, a1, c3, f3, d2, e2, f2, g2, h2. Black pieces are on h1, e1, a1, c3, f3, d2, e2, f2, g2, h2.

7 Bb3	0-0	25 Rd8	Rxd8
8 c3	d6	26 Rxc7	Qb8
9 d4	Bg4	27 exd8Q+	Qxd8
10 Rd1	Qc8	28 Bf4	g5
11 a4	b4	29 Bg3	Rb2
12 a5	bxc3	30 Qc3	Qa8
13 bxc3	Rb8	31 Qd7	Qe1+
14 Bc4	exd4	32 Kh2	Rb1
15 exd4	Nxa5	33 Bx7+	Kh8
16 Rxa5	Rxb1	34 Qa8+	Kg7
17 e5	dxe5	35 Bg6+	
18 dxe5	Na8		

هكذا من الأصل

America edges closer to the brink as Bush sticks to tough line

THE last full week before the January 15 deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait began with President Bush preparing the nation for war, Congress preparing to debate an administration policy in the Gulf which it considers too precipitate, the Pentagon rushing extra medical supplies to Saudi Arabia and peace protests in several American cities.

Administration officials are playing down the prospects of a breakthrough at Wednesday's Geneva meeting between James Baker, the American Secretary of State, and Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister. The reaction of one official to Iraq's refusal to meet EC foreign ministers was that that "doesn't disappoint us". Washington is playing what it likes to call "hardball" to the end,

and is wary of a flurry of last-minute diplomatic initiatives by the French and others which could lead to compromises or partial solutions and divide the anti-Iraq coalition.

In a weekend address to the nation Mr Bush said there would be no "secret diplomacy" when Mr Baker met Mr Aziz. He would simply "restate in person a message for Saddam Hussein: withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally and immediately or face the terrible consequences".

Washington views Mr Aziz as a messenger not a decision-maker, and by stating last Friday that he would not let Mr Baker travel on to Baghdad to meet Saddam in person, Mr Bush appears to have closed off the possibility of Wednesday's talks developing

Mistrust of individual diplomatic initiatives and congressional wavering over military action underlines the US dilemma as the UN deadline nears, writes Martin Fletcher

into something more substantial. Officials anticipate that Mr Aziz may spring a surprise proposal of some sort, but believe the purpose would almost certainly be to delay an attack and score propaganda points.

As it is, American intelligence estimates that Iraq could not complete a withdrawal from Kuwait by January 15 unless it had begun by Thursday.

Mr Baker will restate American demands that Iraq comply with 12 UN security council resolutions

and emphasise that Saddam could not hope to survive a war. He can offer Iraq an assurance that it will not be attacked if it withdraws. He can talk in broad terms about life in the Middle East after the crisis and possible new regional security structures but can make no linkage between Iraqi withdrawal and resolution of the Palestinian issue.

President Bush said in his address that military action would not necessarily begin immediately after January 15, but emphasised that time was "running out

because each day that passes brings real costs". These included Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction capable of threatening neighbouring states and US forces, the devastating effect on east European and other economies, the continued destruction of Kuwait and the fact that Iraqi forces in Kuwait were becoming increasingly well dug in. "We risk paying a higher price in the most precious currency of all, human life, if we give Saddam more time to prepare for war," he stated.

Sections of the address were clearly directed at Congress, where many Democrats believe sanctions should be given more time and insist that under the constitution Mr Bush must obtain congressional authorisation before

going to war. George Mitchell, the Democratic leader of the Senate, said a full Senate debate and vote on administration policy would definitely be held before January 15, and could begin as early as Thursday. Many senators and representatives want to limit the president's freedom of action and the administration also fears that a long, divisive debate could encourage Baghdad to stand firm. More than 50 representatives have signed a resolution which seeks to prevent Mr Bush from launching an attack without explicit congressional authorisation.

Mr Bush said economic sanctions were not forcing Iraq from Kuwait and it was not clear "when or even if they will be successful". He said the nation had to "stand together, not as Republicans or

Democrats, conservatives or liberals, but as Americans". Over the weekend peace protests were held in a number of cities, including Washington, New York and Los Angeles, and a few churches have opened their doors as sanctuaries for soldiers who do not want to fight.

Both *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* reported yesterday that US medical teams in Saudi Arabia were lacking important medical supplies and personnel and complaining of outdated equipment as they prepared to cope with possibly thousands of casualties in the event of war.

The Pentagon is rushing extra medicines, equipment and people to the region to try and remedy the problems.

Foreigners jam airports as Israel gets ready for war

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL yesterday said President Saddam Hussain's uncompromising weekend speech and the impending American ultimatum amounted to a "declaration of war".

Panic-stricken foreigners jammed Israel's ports and airports in an attempt to leave the country. South African Airways, Cyprus Airways, and the Polish airline, Lot, suspended flights to and from Tel Aviv with immediate effect. The Scandinavian airline, SAS, said it would follow suit on Wednesday. Sweden and Germany advised their nationals to leave Israel and Jordan unless they had work commitments. Lufthansa was yesterday laying on extra flights for Germans wishing to leave.

Addressing the Israeli cabinet yesterday, David Levy, the foreign minister, said President Saddam's statement was "a declaration of war". He said: "It is actually total extremism." Mr Levy said that after the war ended, Israel increasingly would be pressurised to withdraw from the occupied territories as America sought to reward its Arab allies and build a Middle East security system. But Ehud Olmert, the health minister, said

Israel was pleased there had been "no change in the US posture" in the run-up to Wednesday's talks with Iraq in Geneva.

Airlines cancelling flights gave soaring insurance rates as their main reason. Because of the tensions in the Middle East, insurance costs have risen by between 20 and 40 per cent.

A spokesman for the German embassy in Tel Aviv said the rush to leave was "not an evacuation", but "a precautionary measure ahead of January 15".

Arieh Ya'ari, head of the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East, writing yesterday in *Jerusalem Post*, urged the right-wing government of Yitzhak Shamir to open talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation to undercut Iraq. He said President Saddam's declaration that he intends to attack Israel should be believed. Alternatively, the Iraqi leader could present a last-minute retreat from Kuwait as a temporary sacrifice "for the sake of Palestine".

Either scenario endangered Israel and was "an unparalleled challenge to its resourcefulness". Because the Palestinian issue was bound to command centre stage, Mr Ya'ari said, "we should make the most unexpected move by proposing immediate talks with the PLO on an Israeli retreat from the territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state therein". This would save Israel "from an isolation which may cut us off from the world in case of war".

There was no sign yesterday of any senior official support for his proposal. Yitzhak Rabin, the former defence minister, said Israel must resist at all costs any attempt to link an end to the Gulf confrontation to a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Consequently, Israel should not propose peace plans with the Palestinians until the confrontation was over.

The newspaper *Ha'aretz* urged Israel to stop threatening President Saddam because "it would be better to leave him guessing as to what will happen if he attacks Israel with chemical weapons". Israeli newspapers also reported that examinations for foreign students had been brought forward so they could leave Israel.

● BEIRUT: Israeli warplanes yesterday attacked Palestinian guerrilla positions in southern Lebanon, killing at least one gunman and wounding five others, security sources and Israeli radio said (Ali Jaber writes).

Palestinian sources in the south said six Israeli F-15 warplanes dropped 18 rockets in two separate sorties at a base manned by the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by George Habash, east of the port city of Sidon, south of Beirut.

Ronald Butt, page 8

Britain may intern Iraqi nationals

The British government is examining contingency plans, including the possibility of internment, to deal with around 5,000 Iraqis living in Britain, in the event of war in the Gulf (Lin Jenkins writes).

The activities of Iraqis in Britain are being closely monitored. Sixty-seven whose presence was thought to be a threat to security were deported last week. Others will be expelled if they are thought to pose a risk.

A spokesman for the Home Office said: "Five thousand is a large number, but most came to Britain to escape the regime in Iraq. We have to consider areas of difficulty that might arise if war were to be declared, but we have not yet reached that stage."

The Aliens Restriction Act, under which mass internment was used during the Second World War was repealed by the Immigration Act of 1971.

Leading article, page 9

Ship hits mine

Dubai — A Cypriot-flagged freighter was reported sinking after hitting a mine near the Strait of Hormuz. The ship's crew was rescued. It was not clear if the blast meant Iraq was sowing new mines or if the mine was left over from the Iran-Iraq war. (Reuters)

Secret army

Madrid — Secret plans by Felipe González, the prime minister, to increase Spanish forces in the Gulf without the knowledge of parliament, have been reported in *El Mundo*, a critic of Madrid's Gulf policy. Defence officials yesterday were unavailable to comment.

African force

Freetown — Sierra Leone will become the third black African state to join the multinational force against Iraq when it sends 200 soldiers to the Gulf early next week, military sources said yesterday. Both Senegal and Niger have sent 500 men. (Reuters)

Punter's darling

Beirut — A white stallion called Everyone's Darling — Habib al-Kul in Arabic — won its event by five lengths watched by about 7,000 people at Beirut's first race meeting in six years. (Reuters)



Outward bound: soldiers of the 43rd squadron of the German air force at Hamburg boarding a military jet destined for Turkey. The troops will provide support for 18 fighter jets sent to strengthen Nato's southeastern flank. It is the first time since the second world war that German soldiers have served overseas

Bonn's decision to deploy Luftwaffe angers Germans

FROM ANNE MCELVOY IN BONN

GERMANY yesterday dispatched 18 Alpha fighter jets to join the Nato deployment in Turkey, where defences are being strengthened against a possible attack by Iraq. It was the first German military deployment outside its borders since the second world war.

The jets, to be stationed just 250 miles from the Iraqi border, left from the southern base of Oldenburg early yesterday. They were accompanied by 160 soldiers, who will also be based in Erbac in southern Turkey.

Belgium and Italy also sent aircraft yesterday to reinforce Nato's southeastern flank. Belgium sent 18 Mirage 5 fighter-bombers from a base at Bierst, and six F104 Starfighters took off from Italy.

Bonn's decision to deploy Luftwaffe jets has angered the opposition Social Democrats. Hans-Jochen Vogel, their leader, said the decision, taken before the Bundestag reconvened, undermined the country's Basic Law and the constitutional requirement that the engagement of German troops be preceded by a two-thirds majority vote of approval in the parliament.

Public opinion remains resolutely against German involvement in military confrontations. According to a poll by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* at the weekend, three-quarters of Germans in the east and the west would prefer not to be embroiled in external conflicts.

Demonstrations against the sending of troops to Turkey were held in several cities under the banner, "No blood for oil". President von Weizsäcker responded to the protests by saying: "We cannot shirk our common European responsibilities. We

must not withdraw into ourselves," he said in a radio interview.

But it is the more cautious stance of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the foreign minister, that has won public support. After the meeting of European Community foreign ministers last week, he said the international community ought to "talk, not shoot".

Disturbed by unification and its problems, most of the population has only just awakened to the threat of war, knows little of the



Vogel said the move broke constitutional rules

minutiae of the faraway conflict and is uninspired by the thought of German participation in it.

After the deployment of German equipment and a handful of destroyers in the eastern Mediterranean, Germans expected no further contribution from their government. The dispatch of the jets has come as an unpleasant surprise.

The liberal weekly, *Die Zeit*, devoted a section of the paper to a grim account of the last German

offensive in Baghdad: General Eric von Falkenhayn's unsuccessful plan to recapture the city from the British in 1918.

The Gulf has catapulted the problem-ridden Social Democrats back into public favour. They have joined ranks with the doves of Herr Genscher's Free Democrats, leaving Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, and his Christian Democrats rather awkwardly in the role of hawks as he tries to satisfy Nato's demands.

After their country's instigation of two world wars this century, Germans have little taste for military adventure. One of the few rhetorical sentiments on which West Germany and the former East Germany were agreed on was the adage, "only peace shall go forth from German soil".

Even if it was possible to galvanise the German people for military action, it is too late now. The Gulf conflict came at an unfavourable time as far as the politicians were concerned — in the middle of preparations for unity and a threat to the overall party mood. They chose to carry on as if nothing had happened, and the press and public followed suit on the reasoning that if Herr Kohl, was not sufficiently bothered about the *Anschluss* of Kuwait, they had no reason to get worked up about it. Since the Iraqi invasion, the chancellor had continued to ignore the conflict in favour of trumpeting the glowing economic future of the united Germany.

The end of 1990 has proved to be a psychological cut-off point for the political establishment and public opinion alike. Suddenly Germany is catching up on the months of worry, arguments and panic it missed while attending its own unification bash.

EC stands firm after talks snub

FROM GEORGE BROCK, EUROPEAN EDITOR, IN BRUSSELS AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE European Community governments talked tough on the Gulf yesterday, reflecting surprise and disappointment at Baghdad's rejection of their invitation to hold talks with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, this week.

"The ball is entirely in their court," Mark Eyskens, the foreign minister of Belgium, said yesterday. He firmly rejected the Iraqi suggestion that an EC delegation visit Baghdad, as well as the allegation that Europe was taking orders from the United States.

The European position on the Gulf conflict, he said, was based on the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, which has set a deadline of January 15 for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. Arab countries which wished to see Iraqi withdrawal from the occupied territories must realise that if Iraq did not withdraw, implementation of UN resolutions on the Israeli occupation became correspondingly harder. "Iraq is not, in reality, the ally of the Palestinians," he said.

The European invitation to Mr Aziz for a meeting next Thursday remains open. The statement from Luxembourg, currently the president of the community, simply expressed "regret" at the Iraqi refusal. The agreed community stance, which makes no linkage between the Gulf and other Middle East issues, stands.

In Paris, President Mitterrand of France, who is awaiting a full report from a senior official following his visit to Baghdad last week, will chair an important cabinet meeting devoted to the Gulf conflict on Wednesday.

Michel Vauzelle, the president of the National Assembly's foreign affairs committee, held a four-

and-a-half hour meeting with Saddam in Baghdad on Saturday. Yesterday, he arrived in Tunis amid speculation that he might see Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation chairman and close ally of Saddam.

French radio reports had quoted M Vauzelle in Baghdad as saying: "He (Saddam) is ready for concessions if there is a conference on Palestine. The newspaper *Le Journal du Dimanche* quoted M Vauzelle as saying: "I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic. One should be realistic. All is possible on condition, naturally, that Iraq makes certain gestures."

He said he had obtained "a detailed and solid explanation of the Iraqi position. I will take this to the French authorities."

In his latest remarks, M Mitterrand said that for war to be avoided "there must be a clear intention on Baghdad's part for a complete, programmed and duly supervised evacuation of Kuwait".

He added that it would be desirable for a United Nations Security Council meeting to be held around January 15 so that all the latest factors could be "brought together" before launch



Vauzelle says Saddam is ready for concessions

ing a war, even though this was not essential as the council "has already taken decisions".

Aside from a certain meeting with M Vauzelle upon his return, President Mitterrand will chair an important French cabinet meeting devoted to the crisis, on Wednesday.

He is scheduled to meet with James Baker, the US Secretary of State, on Tuesday. Other key meetings were announced in Paris here at the weekend. On January 14, M Mitterrand will meet the British prime minister John Major in Paris, while a meeting of the French defence council, or war cabinet, is scheduled for January 16.

A public opinion poll at the weekend had 64 per cent of those questioned approving M Mitterrand's stand on the Gulf.

Whitehall agrees to limit news censorship

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH broadcasters have reached agreement with the Ministry of Defence that television footage shot during a war with Iraq be censored only if it endangers the lives of soldiers or reveals sensitive strategic information to Iraq.

All Gulf material is to be pooled by the BBC, ITN, Sky News and TV-am. Defence ministry personnel in the Gulf are to inspect only reports of fighting before they are transmitted via satellite to Britain for news broadcasts.

It is not yet agreed, however, what criteria the ministry will use to decide where the line should be drawn, Stewart Purvis, editor of ITN's *News At Ten*, said yesterday. "The MoD does not have a veto, just a right to look at the pictures and to point out what is a violation of the agreement we have reached. Interpretation of that agreement is a matter for

discussion at the time. Who has the final say, in the event of a disagreement, will be discussed with the MoD this week."

A BBC news and current affairs spokesman said: "We can foresee (the ministry) wanting to control military facts but not the angle broadcasters take on a story. We wouldn't want to jeopardise the safety of the troops but, equally, we will not relinquish our independence."

It is not clear to what extent the ministry, understood to be resistant to fighting a war that is televised internationally, will try to censor reports to keep up morale and avert domestic political opposition, as occurred in America over Vietnam.

During the Falklands war, the BBC was prevented from reporting the bombing of the British ship *Sir Galahad*, although the defence ministry allowed an ITN report that differed from the BBC's only in its commendation of the British troops' bravery. "I hope this does not happen in

the Gulf. The MoD may want to boost morale but we have a different job to do: we must present the facts fairly and accurately," Mr Purvis said.

He said it was unrealistic to think that the American military would be more accommodating and allow American war correspondents to observe action first-hand at the front. "The American authorities have learned a lot from British news management during the Falklands war, as well as their own experience during Vietnam. The invasions of Grenada and Panama, as well as the bombing of Libya, showed that."

It is believed, however, that broadcasts would be more difficult to control in the Gulf than in the Falklands, where the defence ministry restricted access to the battleground, and in Panama, where the American military kept journalists incommunicado at a US base for the first two days of the invasion. During the bombing of Libya in 1986, details of the

conflict came from the briefing room of the Pentagon. In a Gulf war, the Ministry of Defence may tighten its already strict control over reporters' movements and interviews with soldiers. The ministry is understood to be worried that in a protracted war, with many casualties, the volume of footage, would make monitoring almost impossible.

The sharing of information by the British and American press pools, as well as journalists from other countries, is sure to become an issue. "One shot from one pool will be objectionable to one army but not another. It will be difficult to co-ordinate the flow of information," Mr Purvis said.

Broadcasters deny reports that they have agreed not to transmit pictures of prisoners of war or mass destruction. Senior editors from ITN, the BBC and Sky News are to continue negotiations. National newspaper editors have been invited to a meeting at the ministry today.

Burmese army closes in on Karen rebel strongholds

FROM NEIL KELLY IN MANERPLAW, BURMA

ARTILLERY and mortars which Burma buys from China are pounding Kawmoora, one of the last two strongholds of the Karen rebels who say a government offensive intended to finish off their 42-year rebellion is imminent.

Burmese forces are being supplied from Thailand, and food and other goods are pouring across the border. Intelligence sources say lorries owned by Thai timber companies felling teak in Burma have been moving Burmese troops. At the Karen headquarters here, at the confluence of the Salween and Moei rivers, anti-aircraft guns are ready for attacks by the Burmese air force.

Thai military officers say it would be virtually impossible for the Burmese to capture the rebel bases, both of which are protected by rivers and mountains, without entering Thailand to attack from the east.

Last year the Thais turned a blind eye to Burmese intrusions, making possible the capture of four important Karen bases. But Arthit Uralrat, the new Thai foreign minister, has indicated that policy towards the military government in Rangoon may change. He said co-operation between the two countries hinged on a settlement of Burma's problems by non-violent means.

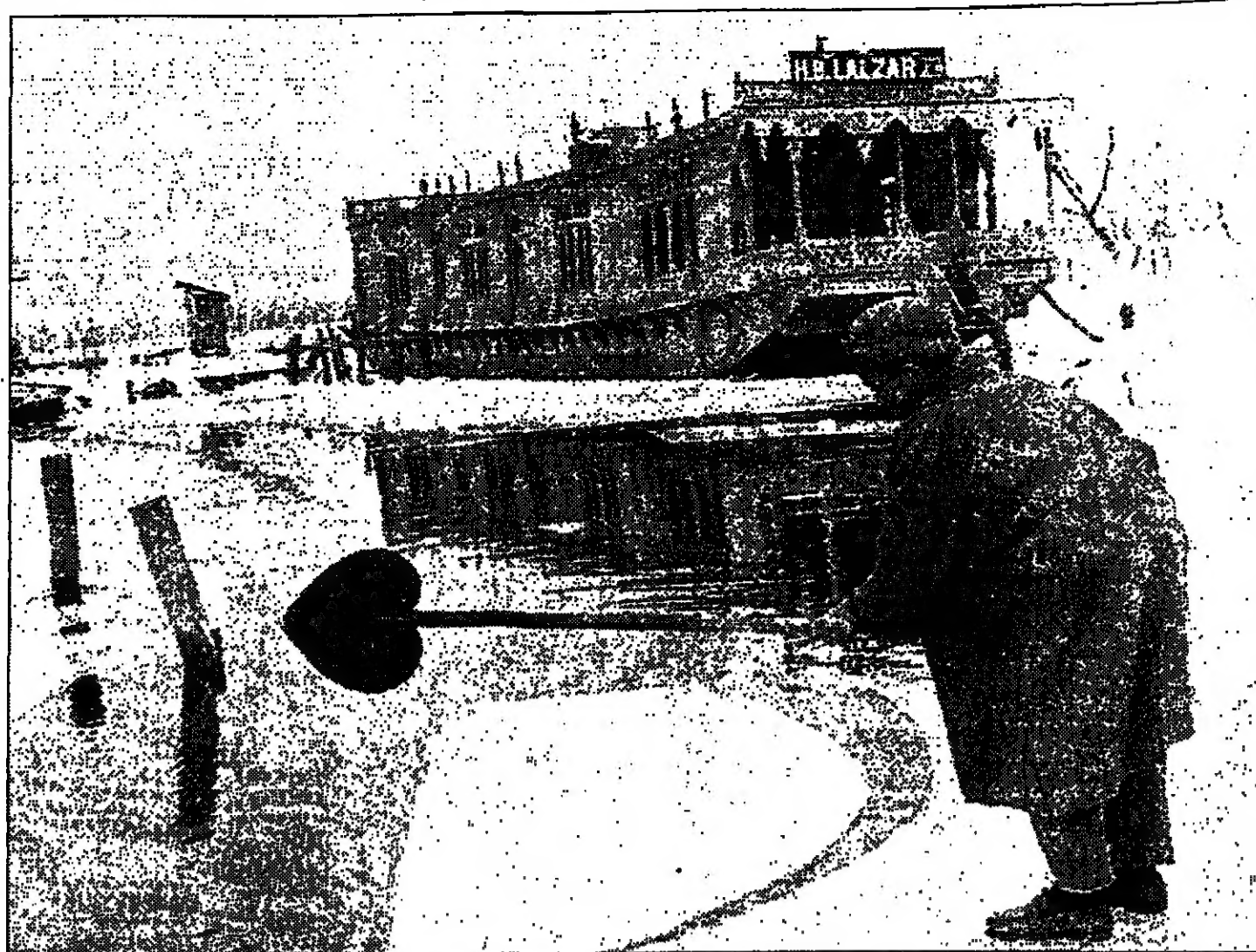
Burmese units are two days' walk away through the Dawna mountains. Gunfire is heard from time to time. "That's our infiltration columns making contact with the enemy," said Lieutenant-colonel Aye Myint, a former regular Burmese soldier who defected to the Karens. The Karens, he said, had learnt about penetrating enemy lines while fighting an underground war with British forces against the Japanese during the second world war.

The colonel said he was forced to defect, despite 30 years' service, because of the army's suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations

two years ago. "What I saw then made me hate the men who run the army and Burma. I could not believe my eyes, seeing men I had served with shooting unarmed people, even monks and children. I was ashamed. I wanted to break my links altogether. People now hate soldiers so much they won't even give them water."

Now 55, he retired from the army in 1983 but remained on the reserve. Eighteen months ago, he travelled to the border areas near Thailand controlled by the Karens. His defection had the support of his wife, a former army medical officer, and his two student daughters, who were active in the demonstrations. He has not heard from them for more than a year. He lost his army pension, about £60 a month, but said: "I don't want anything from people I despise so much."

There has been no statement about him from Rangoon where all the media are in government hands, but the military community's loyalty is all-important to the Rangoon junta. Colonel Aye Myint said it would not take much to bring about a full-scale mutiny in the army's lower ranks.



Testing time: a Kashmiri boy tapping the ice with a paddle as he stands in the middle of Lake Dal, outside Srinagar. The lake, famous for its ornate houseboats, has frozen over for the first time in four years as the coldest weather in decades swept much of India, killing many homeless people and

inflicting misery on tens of millions of slum dwellers (Christopher Thomas writes from Delhi). The nationwide death toll from the cold is officially put at more than 80, but it is certainly higher. Delhi had its coldest night in 25 years over the weekend with a temperature of 2.4°C, and in the past week

Bombay has recorded some of its lowest temperatures in more than 50 years. The Kashmir valley has been severely disrupted by exceptionally heavy snow. Officials said it was impossible to restore power and water supplies quickly because of the nightly curfews in the state.

Megachurch pastors hawk 'fast-food' religion

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

Huge shopping malls have long since replaced most general stores across the United States, but now the traditional parish church is under threat from the religious equivalent of a supermarket.

So-called megachurches, each holding services for more than 2,000 people on an average Sunday and providing a range of other facilities from child care to diet classes, are springing up around the country at a dramatic speed. John

Vaughan, of the Southwest Baptist University, and president of the International Megachurch Research Centre, estimates there are now 270 churches in America with average weekly congregations of more than 2,000 and says that a new church joins that group every two to three weeks.

"The emergence of the megachurch is the most important development of modern Christian history," said Lyle Schaller, a town planner turned clergyman who is a leading figure in the Church Growth Movement, which works to increase church attendance.

The "one-stop" church is largely a result

of a new type of churchgoer. America's baby-boom generation, now thirty-something or slightly older with young children, is returning to the church. Having grown up in an era of consumerism, what these new parents seek in a church is not only God, but also a variety of facilities.

Gary Gates, vice-president of operations at the Church Growth Centre in Corunna, Indiana, said: "We do have a consumer society, but that does not mean we cannot be effective in reaching people because they have that kind of mentality. We do not change our message, but we change our approach." The largest

churches in the United States support a network of counselling groups, educational classes, sports teams and social activities — providing a "total religious environment".

The Second Baptist Church of Houston, for instance, which claims 17,000 members, has 64 softball teams, 48 basketball teams, and 84 teams playing soccer, volleyball and American football.

Most of the big new churches are non-denominational. Critics complain that megachurch pastors are preaching "fast-food religion", but the proponents say that they are merely trying to reach as many people as possible.

Peking jails student leaders

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

PEKING has sentenced the first group of student leaders to be tried for counter-revolutionary crimes more than 18 months after the pro-democracy movement they headed was crushed by the army at Tiananmen Square. Of the nine people on trial at the weekend, four students featured on a list of 21 "most wanted" people issued by the authorities soon after the mass killings of June 4, 1989.

The sentences passed on them, ranging from two to four years, were light by Chinese standards and the time spent in custody before being tried is to be subtracted from the duration of imprisonment. The news agency Xinhua reported on Saturday that nine "criminals" had been tried and sentenced in Peking, after being accused of inciting subversion and the overthrow of the socialist system, of organising attacks on the martial law troops, and of assembling crowds to disturb traffic.

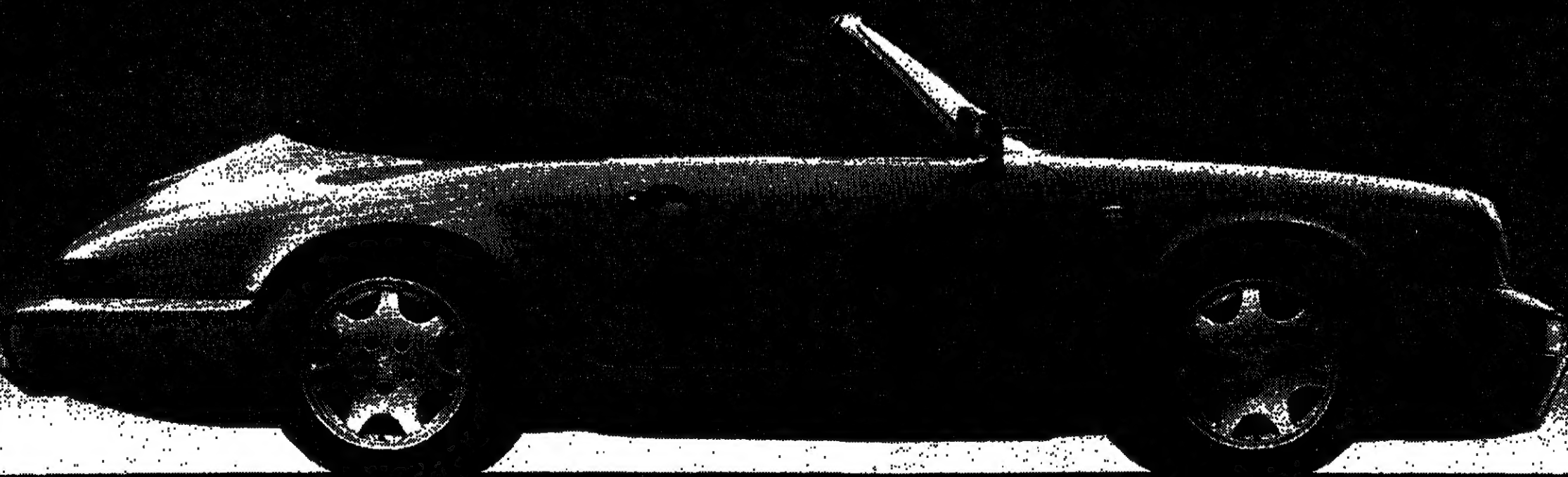
Xinhua described the court hearings as "public". Attendance at trials is usually by invitation only and foreign journalists based in Peking had repeatedly requested permission to attend the hearings, and had been refused.

Chinese intellectuals believe the courts displayed leniency for foreign consumption in this case. Richard Schifter, the American assistant secretary of state for human rights, recently visited China for talks with officials in an important concession by Peking, which has refused to discuss human rights with foreign visitors.

Many Chinese believe the government has very different plans for the big fish of the democracy movement, who include student leader Wang Dan, editors Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming, and possibly even Bao Tong, the private secretary of ousted leader Zhao Ziyang. They are expected to go on trial this month.

International human rights organisations say hundreds of people arrested after the Peking killings remain in detention without trial or have been sentenced in secret.

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ability to think on the driver's behalf is quite uncanny. 'Almost telepathic' is how one magazine described it.

Schiller, in his poem 'Ode to Joy', might also have included a few lines about the Tiptronic.

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(Goethe's main theme was Man's search for happiness. Pity he isn't around to test drive this car.)

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Peking
jails
student
leaders

Gorbachev decrees that private farmers will have more land

FROM BRUCE CLARK AND MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Gorbachev has ordered a sharp rise in the amount of land available to individual farmers, while carefully stopping short of endorsing the controversial principle of outright private ownership.

In a presidential decree that was promised in outline at last month's Congress of People's Deputies, Mr Gorbachev called for between 7.5 million and 12.5 million acres of land to be made available for co-operatives and individual tenants by the spring.

That would mark a huge increase over the 300,000 acres which were individually tended last spring, but it would still represent less than 3 per cent of the arable land.

In another development, Boris Yeltsin, the leader of the Russian Federation, said at the weekend that he was still not satisfied with the size or composition of the central budget and threatened again to withhold a large part of Russia's contribution.

The idea of private ownership, fiercely opposed by the communist establishment and also by state farm chairmen who wield tremendous influence in rural areas, is to be the subject of a forthcoming referendum.

President Gorbachev has endorsed the hardliners' objections of principle, and his decree will add to resentment in the Russian Federation by ignoring its deputies' recent decision to allow private plots under strictly specified conditions. But the presidential order may also upset conservatives by its insistence that all "unreasonable obstacles" to small holdings should be removed.

Coming almost as close to approving private plots as is possible without mentioning the word, the decree calls for the "unimpeded transfer" of land holdings to the lifelong "possession" of peasant farmers and their heirs, on leasehold terms. However, there is no suggestion that it will become possible to buy, let or even sublet land.

Republican and local governments are instructed to complete by mid-1991 an inventory of state and collective land that is not being used rationally, a process apparently intended to culminate with the transfer of far more than the initial 12.5 million acres. Regional authorities are also urged to provide financial incentives for embryonic peasant farms.

But one provision in the decree clearly illustrates President Gorbachev's continuing need to assuage conservative resistance. After suggesting that ways should be found of changing the status of poorly functioning collective farms, it states firmly: "The compulsory transformation of collective farms, state farms and other agricultural enterprises is unacceptable."

Taken as a whole, the decree marks an uneasy compromise between Mr Gorbachev's lingering attachment to communist principles in agriculture and the pressing need to improve food supplies. While Mr Yeltsin's remarks about the central budget seem to undermine President Gorbachev's claim to have reached preliminary agreement with all the republics, there are signs that the two sides are much closer to agreement than they were a week ago. Mr Yeltsin said he was "alarmed" by the optimism Mr Gorbachev had shown at the end of last week and insisted the Russian Federation would stick to the budget approved by its parliament before the end of last year.

Mr Yeltsin sounded unyielding on the budget question, but his actual figures suggest that the gap between the centre and the Russian Federation has narrowed and that both Mr Yeltsin and Mr Gorbachev may have made substantial concessions.

Bernard Levin, page 8



Sunday closing: a demonstrator outside the Moscow offices of *Komsomolskaya Pravda* holding a placard stating ironically, "Thanks for not having cut the light", after a sudden order that there will be no Soviet national newspapers on Sundays. Soviet newspapers have suffered for years from paper shortages and, with the exception of the Communist party daily, *Pravda*, already do not appear on Mondays.

Bielecki plans mortgages to help house Poles

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN WARSAW

THE Polish prime minister, Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, has pledged that his new government will provide new ways of tackling the housing problem by making available mortgages and credits for the first time.

The veteran Solidarity economist said Poland would see an acceleration of the privatisation process, in an otherwise routine inaugural speech on Saturday during which he presented his new cabinet to parliament.

Mr Bielecki listed the government's two main objectives as creating conditions "for every individual to be a real owner of part of the national capital" and the development of a capital market.

Poles can wait as long as 50 years to obtain a flat of their own, but some potential home buyers are not optimistic that a government effort to make mortgages available would solve any problems at all. "It would be just like (Mrs) Thatcher - killer mortgages," said one Warsaw resident who lives in a one-room flat with his wife and young son, referring to the high interest rates

that would have to be charged to keep up with inflation.

Mr Bielecki said that while the housing squeeze is a special concern for the government, it cannot hope to resolve the problem single-handedly and the capital market must take over. So far, no profit-oriented concern has ventured into the quicksand of financing housing construction in Poland. Even though triple-digit inflation was brought under control by the previous government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, it is still running at 70 per cent a year.

Along with rapid change in some areas, Mr Bielecki has promised continuity. Five of his 19 ministers are holdovers from the previous administration, including Leszek Balcerowicz, the deputy prime minister and finance minister, and author of the austerity plan to lead Poland out of its deep post-communist economic slump.

Many of the rest are economists from Gdansk, like Mr Bielecki, and this is expected to make itself felt as government policy moves away from a Warsaw orientation.

Britons held in nuclear protest

Las Vegas - Several people from Britain were among 250 demonstrators arrested by police who are to be charged with trespass after they walked on to a Nevada nuclear test site during an anti-nuclear demonstration.

An estimated 2,000 to 3,000 people, including nuns from Oxford and 150 people from Canada, took part in the demonstration on Saturday, organised in part by the Greenpeace anti-nuclear and environmental group to draw attention to a United Nations conference on a nuclear test ban opening in New York today. (Reuters)

Subsidy cuts

Berlin - Theo Waigel, the German finance minister, wants to phase out rent, energy and transport subsidies in former East Germany by the end of 1993, the *Berliner Morgenpost* reported. (Reuters)

Leader arrested

Kuala Lumpur - The Malaysian government arrested Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan, the Sabah chief minister, for corruption. He was later freed on bail. Datuk Pairin had defected to the opposition in October elections.

Advisers 'killed'

San Salvador - The United States ambassador to El Salvador said he has concluded that two of three American military advisers killed last week were "murdered in cold blood" after rebels shot down their helicopter. (Reuters)

Hair today...

Singapore - The Supreme Court, breaking with British inherited tradition, has decided judges should stop wearing wigs in court and be addressed as "your honour" instead of "your lordship". (Reuters)

Mafia turns Bologna into capital of crime

FROM PAUL BOMPARD IN ROME

BOLOGNA, once Italy's showcase city of civic efficiency, orderly prosperity and cultural tradition, is fast becoming a capital of crime and violence.

There are fears that the town that boasted the world's oldest university, impeccable social services and solid wealth, has become an appetising prize for the Mafia.

The latest crime was the murder of three carabinieri, para-military policemen, on Friday night, as they patrolled a Bologna suburb. Investigators believe they were ambushed as a vendetta for a drug seizure in December in which one of the traffickers was killed in a shoot-out with carabinieri. "We are facing an

Frontier guards fire on Albanians

FROM RICHARD BASSETT AND DESA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

AT LEAST four people were injured at the weekend when several hundred Albanians attempted to cross into Yugoslavia and clashed with Albanian border guards near Shkoder. The guards opened fire as the angry refugees threw rocks and hammers in an attempt to force a crossing, witnesses reported.

The Albanians had gathered along the frontier after rumours that the border was open. Over the past week, more than 5,000 Albanians have fled into Greece disillusioned with their government's reform programme.

The refugees had neither passports nor visas. Under President Alia's hasty reform programme, initiated last spring and forced to gather speed after protests at Christmas, all of Albania's 3.4 million inhabitants are entitled to a passport. But delays in issuing passports have led to protests, and delays in Western governments in issuing visas has also contributed to the Albanians' frustration.

Mr Alia's refusal to postpone his country's first free elections for more than 40 years to beyond February 10 and so give the opposition time to organise its platform has reinforced suspicions that the communists have no intention of relinquishing all their power.

Meanwhile the number of Albanians crossing into Greece dropped sharply yesterday with only 53 people slipping across the closed frontier (AP reports from Athens).

On Saturday, 118 people crossed the border. New arrivals confirmed that Albanian border guards were not allowing people to cross and were firing warning shots to deter them.

offensive by organised crime," said a Bologna police officer.

The "execution" of the three is one of a series of crimes in the city. In October escaping hold-up men shot dead a man who was taking down the licence number of their car. On December 27 robbers held up a petrol station and killed a man washing his car. They then murdered a young man who came to his front door as they were switching cars. In the same period, two gypsies were killed in attacks on their camps with petrol bombs and sub-machine guns.

Residents fear the once-civilised city is succumbing to organised crime normally associated with southern Italy.



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IN THE FIELD.

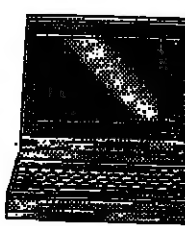
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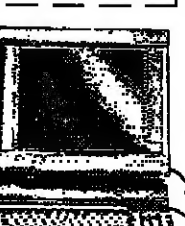
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FOR PEOPLE WHO MEAN BUSINESS

Gulfs apart in Europe

Ronald Butt

The government paid a high price to avert the risk of the rest of the European Community driving towards some form of full monetary union without Britain's participation. East of the Atlantic, with Mrs Thatcher's reluctant assent, it agreed to join the exchange-rate mechanism. The purpose was not primarily to give sterling a quick boost and enable interest rates to come down — which in the event was quickly disappointed. Sterling has been put in a strait-jacket, the government is unwilling to devalue and interest rates must remain high — whatever the consequences in terms of continuing recession — to maintain sterling above the lower ERM limit. Can all this be justified by the use that can now be made of Britain's opportunity to take part in shaping the Community's economic and political future along sensibly realistic lines?

We shall never of course know whether Britain would have been shut out, with the rest of the Community moving roughly along the lines indicated by the Delors plan to a single currency and central bank, which would imply some kind of matching central political authority. The immediate outcome, however, was the sweetness and light of the Rome summit, where M Delors hardly concealed his fears that the other member states might not see the future (and the need for preserving the rights of member nations expressed through national parliaments) more as the British do.

Since then, the uneasy and uncertain role played by the Community in the Gulf crisis has illustrated only too clearly the stresses within the Community between differing notions of national self-interest and of the proper function of the Community. The British government has underwritten each stage of the American response to the Iraqi aggression and has involved itself militarily up to the hilt. Whether we should have been quite so unconditional in doing so if Mrs Thatcher had already left Downing Street can only be a matter for intellectual speculation.

As it is, we have placed our forces under American command, and it would hardly be possible now for us to detach ourselves from whatever action President Bush decides to take, even if we had doubts about his wisdom. Our large, if proportionately small, force in the Gulf has locked us into a junior partnership significantly different from the one we had with the Americans in the second world war, to which we were committed before they were and in which Britain was the necessary base for the invasion of Europe.

In the Gulf it is the Americans who will have to make the decisions of peace and war that we shall

then in practice have to follow. Because of the danger that the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait might escalate, the British decision to participate was the right one. Yet the curious political implication of it is that, whereas President Bush may well be influenced in what he does at the next stage by criticism in Congress, it seems unlikely now that Parliament can have a comparable influence on British military decisions. That, I suppose, could be regarded as a comment on the complexity of the idea of sovereignty.

Other Community states, however, have responded very differently. While supporting America in acting on the UN resolution to do whatever was necessary to counter the Iraqi aggression, they have in practice kept their distance from the Americans. Their responses have reflected both a feeling that the Europeans should assume a separate and distinct European position and also, paradoxically, an urge (notably in the case of France) to assert each nation's right to act in what it perceives to be its own interest. Thus France has sent forces but keeps them outside the American command, while the contribution of other EC nations has been negligible. Similarly, in the discussions last week about separate Community talks with Iraq, some European states, including Germany, seemed to wish to talk more broadly with the Iraqis than the Americans are prepared to do.

Because of the difference between Britain's posture and that of the rest, and in the light of the further evidence that France too would find it hard to renounce its national sovereignty to a European collective, the Gulf has thrown into sharp relief the huge difficulties confronting the Community in attempting to move towards economic and political union. What would be the position of any nation that felt impelled in such a crisis to follow its own interest or moral perceptions against the decisions of the majority? What would be the consequences of ignoring national feeling?

The Gulf has provided further evidence of the need for new approaches to European political and defence cooperation, as Mrs Thatcher herself always advocated. But it is also a reminder to our fellow members of the Community that there is more to British reservations about economic and political union in practice than they are often willing to admit. Mrs Thatcher's acceptance of the presidency of the Bruges Group is no more than a symbol of the existing reality that these great issues are far from settled in Britain and that the glib assumptions of the federalists do the realities of political cooperation in the Community no service.

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

Here in Ecuador, some things are familiar, others strange. Fast-food joints such as Mr Chicken blend, a merry confusion, into a landscape of brightly coloured shanties and towering volcanoes. There is even a McDonald's and, queuing within, Indians in ponchos each sporting a single pig-tail — its length an indication of virility.

Or so Mary Magdalene told us. Mary is a guide from Metropolitan Touring, local operator of the tour booked through a London specialist in exotic travel, the ingeniously named Twicker's World.

As we drove along the Pan-American Highway, Mary explained some of the Indian customs and language. "Many Indian words have been incorporated into our Spanish," she said. "Cuy, for instance, means guinea-pig in the Indian language, but we use it too. It mimics the — how do you say? squeak — of the animal." Cwee, cwee, cwee, she squeaked, indicating the pronunciation.

"Do you eat guinea-pig in Ecuador?"

"Absolutely!" It was my childhood friend in Africa, Jill Bleakley, who introduced me to these deeply unsatisfactory pets. I helped Jill to tend her half-dozen piebald bundles of mindless fluff, and wondered, even then, if their flesh could be as bland as their personalities. Jill's brood came to a sad end one evening, when she gave them oleander leaves to eat.

One hundred per cent mortality in the cage. Six former guinea-pigs, twenty-four little feet pointing skywards. I comforted the weeping Jill, but secretly I thought her grief disproportionate. Guinea-pigs, like humans, are unable to return affection and, like humans, make hopeless pets. I envy the South American Indians their discovery of the one useful purpose to which this deplorable animal can be put. For years I have longed to eat one.

Could Ecuador, and 1991, be my opportunity? Our van rounded a corner, scattering a

family of polka-dotted pigs. And there, by the roadside, was the sign, Mr Cuy. It was January 1. What a way to start the year! Beneath the sign was a shack, a charcoal fire, and what looked like a spit, turning. Wow!

"Mary Magdalene, can we stop?"

"But you've just had lunch."

"Mary, a chance like this may not come again." Our driver, Santiago, stopped the van. I jumped out.

As an old Indian woman in petticoats and a trilly hat turned the handle, six skinned guinea-pigs rotated on a grisly carousel. Each was well, shuffed, if I may express an undignified position delicately. Six little faces, six little jaws of tiny teeth, open, frozen in expressions of guinea-pig rage, spinning gently through the air as the charcoal spit and the woman sang a sentimental song.

She paused. "Which?"

"That one's done nicely," said Mary Magdalene.

"Sit down," said the woman. "I'll bring it."

Five minutes later it arrived, with chips. "That will be 2,000 sucres," she said (about £1.20) — roughly what you would pay in an English pet shop, and that would be without chips.

No knife and fork was supplied. Mary Magdalene and Santiago were watching. I felt my virility was on test. I took one final glance down at the head, which seemed to be taking one final glance back up at me. I noticed the two long, curved bottom teeth and remembered Jill's fatalities after the oleander leaves. A sudden queasiness gripped me.

But there was nothing for it. I picked up the guinea-pig. I bit. Paws flailed from my mouth and miniature ribs fell like needles. It was good. Not at all bland, but rich, sweet, strong and gamy.

In the old city of Cuzco, in Peru, one of the churches has a Last Supper (17th century) painted by an unknown Indian artist, after the European style. It follows the customary forms, except that Christ is eating a guinea-pig. "Coca-Cola?" asked Mary Magdalene.

Red double-deckers, not red routes

John Adams believes London's new clearways, introduced today, will add to the jams and delay confronting the car

Since the formal abandonment of London's motorway programme almost two decades ago, tens of millions of pounds have been invested in an incoherent search for a solution to the city's transport problems. The four and a half miles of "red route" inaugurated today are the pathetic culmination of all this effort.

The clearest statement of the government's transport policy for London remains that enunciated three years ago by the transport minister at the time, Peter Bess. "We believe that policies for London should continue to evolve in response to changing circumstances."

The red route is the most recent mutant thrown up by the process of policy evolution. It is a stunted version of the nearly extinct species known as the urban motorway, and can be distinguished from its cousin, the urban clearway, mainly by its marginal markings, which are red instead of yellow. Like its predecessors, its most notable characteristic is that it provides more road space for cars.

So far it runs only from Hampstead Garden Suburb to Islington, via Archway Road. Soon it is to be extended eastward and eventually will cover 300

miles of road that the department refers to as London's Priority Route Network.

The department claims that this network will benefit not only motorists, but pedestrians, cyclists and bus users. It may help a few, but for most people who live, work and shop along the red routes, life will get worse as more traffic is inevitably attracted to the extra road space. Since almost all the vehicles using the red routes will begin and end their journeys on the other 8,000 miles of road in London that are not red, most of these other roads will also become more congested, noisy, dangerous and polluted.

The recent environment white paper "welcomes the continuing increase of car ownership as an aspect of individual freedom and choice". The Labour party echoes this welcome. The red route network, if implemented in full, would provide a trivial increase in road capacity relative to the increase in "demand" forecast by the transport department. In London, and in most other towns

and cities that pre-date mass car ownership, there is no possibility of providing sufficient parking space, let alone movement space, for the additional cars envisaged.

The impossibility of meeting demand in urban areas by building more roads has been accepted by virtually all transport planners for at least 20 years. Clearways and red routes are worse than pointless. They will make existing traffic problems worse, and postpone the day when the underlying problem can no longer be ignored.

Most of London was built up around a highly efficient rail system that was supplemented by a bus service for shorter journeys. For these using this system the centre represented a peak of mutual accessibility. Policies fostering dependence on the car have turned it into a sink of congestion.

Even if it were possible to rebuild London completely to accommodate the car, the experience of southern California suggests that the result would be a social and environmental disaster. London's transport problems can

be solved only by improving the public transport system that served it so well in the past. A recent report by the (Conservative-dominated) London Boroughs Association demonstrates convincingly that the cheapest, quickest, and most effective way of doing this is by taking it to space from cars and giving it to buses. An extended, rigorously enforced network of bus lanes, with priority at junctions, would simultaneously improve the bus service, relieve overloaded rail services, and reduce car traffic.

For such a policy to succeed without draining the life out of the inner city, one further step is essential. If the welcome being extended to motorists in suburban London and beyond is not withdrawn, people and jobs will abandon the inner city for low density suburbs. The East London river crossing and the upgrading of the North Circular Road, proposals to double the capacity of the M25, the greatly expanded road building programme in non-urban areas, and the continued granting of

planning permission for car-dependent commercial and residential developments are all undermining attempts to improve London by restraining the car.

A trend of policy evolution. In process of the first public enquiry into the Archway Road section of the red route, the transport department proposed a dual-three lane motorway. At each of the three subsequent enquiries it reduced the scale of its proposals, which now amount to little more than painting lines along the sides of the road.

What has changed dramatically since 1973 is not so much the argument about what to do with Archway Road but the political weight of the lobby for improved public transport and restraint of the car. Many more people now doubt the wisdom of policies that would increase further the country's dependence on the car. A growing minority advocate reducing this dependence.

The red routes could turn out to be the final mutation before the transport department's car-dominated policies for London become extinct.

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Bernard Levin finds a lesson in British communism's about-turn on Hitler

When evil was sanctified

As we watch the death-throes of the Soviet Union, it might seem otiose to dwell upon the degrading history of the British Communist party, let alone just one episode in that history. But a book, devoted entirely to an exhaustive account of that episode — indeed, a verbatim record of it — has recently been published, and I have to say that it is quite enthralling. True, it is almost unreadable, partly because its prose is so prefabricated, illiterate and meaningless, and partly because the story it tells is so disgusting, but enthralling it is.

I bought my copy in Central Books, that enduring monument to the eternally dashed hopes of Socialism in Our (Or Any Other) Time, and I paid for it the exorbitantly capitalist price of £34.95. It is called *About Turn*, and well it might be. For it is a full transcription, comprehensively annotated, of the fateful meetings of the CPGB's central committee at the end of September and beginning of October 1939.

The point of those meetings lay in the fact that when war broke out on September 3, the Communist party immediately approved of the fight against Nazi Germany, and its newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, trumpeted the party's approval. However, when the Soviet Union invaded Poland and the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed, Stalin ordered Communist parties everywhere to announce that Hitler being his friend and ally, the war against him was a capitalist-imperialist war, which no communist could support.

You shake your head in wonder at such absurdity, but that is because you are younger than I; schoolboy though I was, I was an alarmingly political one, and I lived through those days so passionately that I can recall every detail of the struggle. Of course, I did not know about the struggle in the CPGB, which was held in secret, but I followed events through the *Daily Worker*, and was as bewildered as any faithful party member obliged to learn how to stand on his head overnight. (The somewhat belated



publication of the transcript of the meetings — a full half-century after the words were spoken — has been made possible by glasnost; the text was in the Soviet archives, and was handed over to what remains of the CPGB. Mind you, the editors, blushing furiously, have to admit that MIS had a copy from the start.)

My tone is light, but it should not be. There were real swine in that assembly, and real swiney was done. The chief figure in the debate was Palme Dutt, Stalin's most obedient whore. His task was to ensure that the comrades would not only give assent to mad and monstrous lies, but would do so with enthusiasm.

Therefore, when you come to the vote, there are those who say, well, I don't agree with this line but it is an international decision so I have to vote for it... That sort of position is... not being to be of use to the Party... The duty of a Communist is not to agree but accept... The votes that we want you to cast, we want

you to cast on the basis of conviction, clearly, definitely, on the basis of conviction... It is a question of being capable of facing up to a wrong thing and determining, not in a half-hearted spirit, the fight for the line that is the correct line...

That, I may say, was about the only passage in Dutt's very long speech that had any discernible meaning at all, so used was he to robotically repeating the party's jargon. Taste this, for instance:

After German fascism had been 'compelled to amend itself' in such a way that it abandoned its offensive leadership against the Soviet Union, we were tending to a position which was looking into the Soviet Union as a convenience for British imperialism, to pull the chestnuts out of the fire; how to win it for the purpose of British imperialism, a feeling of complaint when it did not act, when aggression was taking place on Poland and there was no action from the Soviet Union, the building up of hopes that by this means or that it should be brought in.

Prose or no prose, the comrades now knew what was required of them. One voice immediately spoke for a measure of sanity amid the swamp of indecency; it was Willie Gallacher, the party's only MP. Here are some of the words he spoke:

Comrades, you will permit me to say that I have never at this Central Committee listened to a more unscrupulous and opportunist speech than the one which has just been delivered... never have I known anything so rotten, so mean, so despicable, so dirty...

Strong language, but never fear. When the vote was taken, Gallacher had to be in the House of Commons, but he left the announcement of his position to his comrade Harry Pollitt, and Comrade Pollitt duly announced it: I want the Central Committee to agree to the vote that Comrade Gallacher registered against the thesis to go on record of being in favour. Actually he is for the thesis and therefore wants his vote recorded in favour of it.

There is tragedy here; a small tragedy, but real. A few of the participants in this nightmare — Pollitt, for instance — retained their human standing, and even when Dutt was saying "it is not because the Soviet Union has turned its policy that everyone has got to turn..." [that] is an absolute foul slander, they could feel the pain of such dishonesty; much good it did them when they came to vote, but at least they felt it. But what about the rest, and what about us?

For surely the CPGB's debate holds, and I trust will always hold, a lesson for us and for history. After all, practically every man and woman in that hall knew perfectly well that the Soviet Union was a hideous tyranny, that the show trials were butchery, that the Terror was in full spate. Yet they had tied themselves to the chariot-wheels of a desperate illusion, and millions have done the same, before and since. The capacity for self-deception is in us all, but for some it is a deep and abiding need. Well, let it be; but millions who saw clearly have died in terrible ways because of the actions of those who had blinded themselves in the conviction that if you kill enough men and women, twice two will eventually make five.

So much to do, so little time

Mrs Thatcher's first post-resignation peep over the parapet of public life — by becoming president of the Bruges Group — prompts the question: how has she been coping with life without the trappings of power?

Her aides insist that she is working full-time on establishing an American-style Thatcher Foundation that will launch her on the international lecture circuit this summer. But after the trauma of her ejection from Downing Street, and without her previous access to the huge Whitehall machine, she is finding it difficult to get things moving as fast as she would like.

She now has a total staff of eight, based at a suite of offices in Great College Street, Westminster, loaned by the former party treasurer, Lord McAlpine. With these eight, she has to organise the £10 million financing of the foundation, brief lawyers on drawing up the articles of association and prepare a detailed submission to the Charity Commissioners.

In addition she is still steadily working her way through the promised personal replies to an estimated 30,000 letters sent by well-wishers since Michael Heseltine challenged her for the leadership. "When she got back from her New Year holiday in Switzerland there were another six sacks of mail to deal with," says one source. "Reading the mail is a formidable task in itself."

Without the help of Bernard Ingham's digests, Mrs Thatcher also has to plough through newspapers and magazines in preparation for her first major lecture on international affairs. And on top of all that — whatever she might say

about life beginning at 65 — she must be wondering how she can possibly find the time and effort to write what would be the top-selling memoirs of the century.

Tory MPs will be disappointed to learn that their former leader will not, like her predecessor, make a formal resignation speech from the back benches. One reason for this may be the Commons speaking order. As senior privy councillor, Edward Heath would be entitled to a privilege few expect him, on such an occasion, easily to surrender.

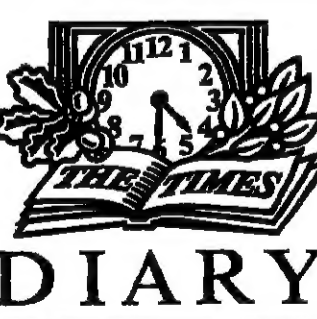
● Tory MP John Biffen did not hesitate when asked recently to open a new commercial radio station in his Shropshire constituency. But instead of the normal tape-cutting ceremony that he expected, he had to brave the cold and sit in the middle of a field surrounded by bullocks. "I'm sure it was good advertising for rural Shropshire," he says, "but it did have a touch of Monty Python about it."

Hops scotched

Conservationists helping to save the common toad from being squashed on the nation's roads have discovered there are even fewer left to protect than they had realised.

As part of a Toads on Roads campaign last year, a Midlands-borough road sign manufacturer, Unigate, gave more than 300 signs to be erected at known crossing points. The signs were backed up by squads of volunteers who went out nightly to carry any toads about to cross — or stranded on the central reservation — to safety.

So successful was the campaign that Unigate executives decided



recently to give away more signs, only to learn that there are few other roadside areas where toads are regularly seen. "The natural

One could ask why does the chicken?

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Dr Robert Runcie, a new biography of Runcie will claim that the tragedy put iron in the archbishop's soul and stopped him retiring early over press criticism of his leadership.

Jonathan Mantle, the biographer, says that coming soon after Terry Waite was kidnapped in Beirut, Runcie was distressed both by the suicide and the malevolence of the press attacks. "He had considered retiring, but at the end of the worst year of his life, Bennett's suicide made him think, 'I'm damned if I'm going to go', and he stayed."

Although Runcie's office at Lambeth Palace refutes the claim, Mantle stands by it, citing many interviews with highly placed church sources.

The book — to be published in April, after Dr George Carey takes over as archbishop — is not without a touch of humour. Recalling Runcie's address to an open-air meeting in Nigeria, Mantle says the approach of an ominous cloud prompted a local churchman to urge the archbishop to raise both his arms. He did — and was applauded by the sudden crowd as the heavens opened.

Union man

With John Major away on a morale-boosting trip to the Gulf, a new piece of his colourful family tapestry has come to light. It seems that the prime minister's father, Tom, is entitled to a footnote in trade union history as one of the inaugural members of the Variety Artists' Federation, the forerunner of Equity, the actors' union.

On the day the union was formed, February 18, 1906, Major senior, then a vaudeville artist,

signed up with his first wife, Kitty, who was one of only four women to join. Soon after, they called in the federation when involved in a dispute with the Shepherd's Bush Empire over the length of their act. It was settled in their favour.

Actor Peter Honri, a member of Equity's ruling council for 20 years, came across the family connection while researching the history of the federation. "I wrote to Mr Major, who was then chief secretary to the Treasury. I didn't even know if I would get a reply, so you can imagine my surprise when he rang me at home. Yes, he said, it was his father. He was on the phone for ten minutes. We had a fascinating conversation."

Honri also received a handwritten note from Major each time his probing uncovered new information. "I have written it all into a book and am looking for a publisher," he says. "If I do find one, Mr Major has agreed to write a postscript."

● For members of Chichester Cathedral choir, the weekend storms stirred memories of the young eagle owl swept into the cloisters by the 1987 hurricane. Befriended by the organist and choristers, who named him Oswald, the owl made himself at home, finally perching on an organ pipe and joining an evening choir practice. That, however, was his undoing. He was so out of tune that a policeman was summoned to remove him. The policeman was bitten and when Oswald was finally captured, "he gave a detailed record of the attack," says Patrick Garland, former artistic director of the Chichester Festival, who has written Oswald's life story. "Someone fortuitously left a tape recorder running."

Sun, sea and unfulfilled dreams

Holidays may hold an irresistible magic, but is that really a triumph of hope over experience?

Geraldine Bedell examines the pleasures and some of the pitfalls of getting away from it all

For many people, the next few weeks will be dominated by decisions about where to go. In the bleak days of January, holidays seem to hold an irresistible magic — offering an escape in the imagination from foul weather, possible war, the recession, and dull old work.

But glossy brochures do not show teeming airports, suggest how to amuse petulant children during an eight-hour delay or how to cope with the uncertainty of families suddenly thrust into unwanted proximity.

Women, by and large, are expected to do the homework involved in setting up a holiday. Peter Smith, the group managing director of the travel group International Leisure, believes 70 per cent of holiday decisions are made by women. Paul Foster, the head of public relations for the travel agents Hogg Robinson, agrees: "Most family men are in a very pressurised situation, so they are happy to relinquish responsibility for such decisions. They will be involved in the price element, of course, but otherwise many men regard holidays as a sort of present for their wives."

Not everyone shares this rosy view of wives being allowed to pick a nice little holiday for themselves. The work involved — finding a holiday that appeals to all the family, booking two weeks to suit everyone's diaries, preparing for the holiday (house-sitters, pet-sitters, cleaning ladies, passports, visas, travellers' cheques and currency), packing and unpacking — is a novel idea of a "present".

In two out of three couples both partners now work, which may involve late nights at the office all round before departure, with little time or energy left over for buying suntan lotions and camera batteries, or washing T-shirts. Eight hours at Gatwick and a roast chicken dinner while you wait for your flight to Tunisia are not what you want after such frantic attempts to get away.

A delay may be just the start of the disappointments. Many couples have quite opposing ideas of what holidays are all about. You may look forward to the summer break as an opportunity, at last, to plough through Proust; but if you are married to someone whose idea of relaxation is to examine every archaeological site within a 100-mile radius, you are in for two weeks of disputes.

If the family includes small children, rows about who vegetates on the beach towel and who builds the sandcastle are unavoidable. But these will seem trivial when compared with the battles when the children are older about whether you go to Tuscany for the art or Corfu for the discos. Someone invariably compromises, but that means not getting what they really want, which is tough if you believe a holiday is what you spend the rest of the year working for.

Husbands and wives suddenly thrown together for a fortnight may have to get to know each other

again. In some families there is a certain amount of tension as they jockey for the position of group leader. Some people even dread holidays because, as soon as they wind down and have no work to distract them, they suffer nightly from angst-ridden bad dreams.

In spite of all the drawbacks, the Association of British Travel Agents (Abta), which conducts an annual poll of attitudes to holidays, reports that the jaunt to the Mediterranean remains an extremely high priority for most Britons. Spain is still the most popular destination overall, although readers of *The Times* preferred France in our Holiday Travellers' Survey last year. David Hurst of Abta says: "People typically say, 'My holiday is vital' or 'It's the number one priority: the reason I work all the rest of the year'."

Although the Mediterranean resorts remain popular, *The Times* readers' second most popular choice was the United States. Florida is the fast-growing destination, and bookings this year are already up 35 per cent on last. Mr Foster attributes Florida's popularity to competitively priced accommodation (a family of four can share a room), cheap car hire and petrol, familiar food and, currently, an excellent exchange rate. The people speak English and are open and friendly — and there is also a feeling that Florida is a very long way from the Gulf, Egypt, Jordan and the Middle East generally have, by contrast, suffered badly from threats of war.

Our emotional commitment to holidays is matched by financial outlay. Sue Ockwell, of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO), says a family of four will typically spend £1,250. However, Peter Conway, the general manager of Speedbird Holidays, British Airways' subsidiary in the rapidly growing long-haul market, says the average person holidaying with his company spends £1,250. Half of those who took part in *The Times* survey spent £750 or more on their main holiday in 1989.

Most families change their holiday patterns with their circumstances. Long-haul travel, once the prerogative of the more adventurous student, is now seen as an important experience for all sorts of young people. "A generation has grown up that is used to going to the Continent with their families. They want to go somewhere different when they reach their twenties, and they are looking further afield," Mr Hurst says. Speedbird carries a high proportion of young couples, especially on honeymoon. They see almost no children.

The expense of taking children away and the dread of them misbehaving on planes encourages a return to self-catering and the Mediterranean once holidaymakers become parents, the Bangkok Oriental being swapped for a villa in Majorca. Majorca can be pleasant, but an empty islet in the Andaman sea it is not, another compromise that can make for a degree of letdown.



Wish you were here: the eternal postcard message may conceal a holiday built on too many expectations

Once the children are grown, there is a return to more exotic destinations and adventure, helped by inherited property and the sale of large houses. Grandparents now are trekking in the Himalayas, riding in Spain or learning to ski at 60.

Whatever the destination, there are no guarantees that a holiday will be a success. Operators identify two groups of people who are likely to come home feeling bitter. The first are natural complainers, who may need to assert themselves against authority. The second are those whose expectations were simply too high. Given the financial and emotional investment, perhaps disappointment is often inevitable. Those who complain, Mr Hurst says, "are often complaining that their expectations were all wrong. We are trying to ensure now that that is not the fault of the brochures."

Mr Smith believes complaints decline as people travel more. "A

few years ago I had a letter from people complaining that we had sent them to Morocco, where they had found there were *Arabs*, plus camels which left dung all over the road," he says. He has also dealt with a couple who complained that the television in an Italian hotel was only in Italian, and another person who wrote to criticise his Spanish hotel for serving only Spanish sherry.

Mr Ockwell's experience, though, is that trivial complaints have increased. "Last year, some people were shocked to find there was no McDonald's in the Tarn department, in deepest France. There were other, equally odd, complaints — that the garden furniture differed from that photographed in the brochure, or that the lightbulbs were the wrong wattage."

Judith Chalmers, the presenter of Thames Television's *Wish You Were Here*...?, avoids all these problems by going back every year

to the same place: Val de Lobo, on the Algarve, which she discovered in the programme's first series, and where she now owns a villa. In addition, she recommends short city breaks of two or three days — eastern Europe is fashionable — to avoid over-dependence on the main summer holiday. Anne Gregg, of the BBC's *Holiday '91*, says: "People very often forget to pack the holiday spirit. Very few holidays really go wrong, but people don't do their homework. I asked a man in Athens airport last year where he was going, and he said, 'Oh, I don't know. Somewhere by a beach'."

Perhaps the best advice is not to get excited about Italian vineyards or Moorish architecture or French food just yet, but to wait until the last minute and pick up some cut-price holiday of a lifetime, in which you have invested few expectations that may be crushed. In the meantime, ignore those brochures on your mat — if you can.

Clues to life in secret service

Crossword addicts are sharpening their pencils for the *Times* championship

A few weeks ago Andrea Conyers-Brown reminded us in the correspondence column that a member of the security service in the Fifties claimed to solve *The Times* crossword in his head to make it more difficult.

This prompted Kathleen Reed, from Haslington, York, to send me her version of an old Thurber cartoon (see below), on the grounds that: "We now have the perfect reply to that irritating question 'What are you thinking?' when the honest answer would be 'nothing'."

If one were looking for current solvers to do the puzzle in their heads, with or without adopting the supine position, the likeliest people would be schoolmasters, closely followed by mathematicians and computer specialists.

At least, that is what analysis of *The Times* Collins Dictionaries Crossword Championship suggests, for such people have been the most successful competitors over the years. The next two biggest groups are solicitors and university professors and lecturers, followed by a whole gamut of diplomats, stamp dealers, housewives, biochemists, actresses, engineers and other addicts.

There is plenty of data for such analysis, as the championship turns 21 this year. The first contest was held in 1970, but because there was no championship in 1982, the 21st championship, and the eighth to be sponsored by Collins Dictionaries, is chronologically a year late.

The idea of a crossword tournament was originally suggested by Peter Hopkirk, then a reporter on *The Times*, in the days when Lord Thomson used to say with pride, "The *Times* are spending money like a drunken sailor."

The tournament turned out to be an unerring success. To qualify, competitors had merely to solve any one of five puzzles. There were 32,000 entrants, of whom more than 20,000 qualified. These had to be drastically reduced, but the first eliminator puzzle still left 1,000 survivors. A second, more difficult, eliminator

backfired. Only 42 people could solve it.

This was probably due to one fiendish clue for AMENITA (catkins): "They hang from the trees in the book of Jeremiah", which set many contestants scouring the Book of Jeremiah in vain, since the answer was concealed in the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah.

At this the organisers capitulated and invited all 1,000 survivors of the first eliminator, of whom, mercifully, only 300 accepted, to tackle 12 puzzles over two days at the Europa Hotel, Grosvenor Square.

The winner was Roy Dean, a diplomat, who used his 17-minute train journey from Bromley to the Foreign Office to solve the puzzle. The contestants included two schoolmistresses from Benenden, who had a daily race to finish it, Jonathan Crowther, Azed of the *Observer*, who was the fastest solver (six minutes for the final puzzle) and Alvar Liddell, the BBC announcer.

After that, numerical embarrassment was avoided by having a series of regional finals before the national final. The first winner under this system was James Atkins, a teacher of singing.

For all those solvers who, though perhaps unable to do the crossword in their heads, would like to enter the championship, this year's finals will be held earlier, in the hope that they will interfere less with holidays.

The programme is: Leeds, Queen's Hotel, Sunday, February 24; Birmingham, Grand Hotel, Sunday, March 10; London A, Hilton Hotel, Park Lane, Saturday, April 13; London B, Hilton Hotel, Park Lane, Sunday, April 14; Glasgow, Stakis Normandy, Sunday, April 28; Bristol, Hilton Hotel, Sunday, May 19; National Final, Hilton, Park Lane, Sunday, July 7.

The qualifying puzzle will be published on Thursday, January 17, and the eliminator puzzle, if needed, on Thursday, March 7.

JOHN GRANT



Kathleen Reed suggests "He says he's doing the crossword in his head" as a new caption for Thurber's "This is my brother Ed. He says he's given up"

Hook, line and binder

BRITISH television commercials are, according to received saloon bar wisdom, the best in the world. Art, as they say, in motion. Better, as they also say, than the actual programmes. But this New Year the commercial channels have been dominated by the type of simplistic, cliché-laden and dreadfully low budget advertising that has Clive James in hysterics.

These commercials are not from Japan; they are the ads for those things that "build, week by week, into encyclopaedic treasure troves of knowledge", the things to which, supposedly, "you'll want to refer again and again", the things that come with a free binder, the things they call partworks. In one ad Tom Pickering — a champion angler but not exactly a television natural — recommends a guide that tells you, in case you thought you should look in the flower beds or the cupboard under the stairs, where to find fish for fishing. In another, an enthusiastic voice-over promotes "a way of bringing the country into your home, step by step". It has nothing to do with muddy shoes. Why are the ads like this?

"Because they work," says Patrick Cavendish, chairman and chief executive of Eglemoss, publishers of *The Art of Fishing*, *The Country Look* and *The Living Countryside*. "If you're trying to sell a partwork you've got to say 'here it is' and show the viewers exactly what they are going to get out of it. Too many adverts are just fun, pop, jazz."

The retail trade has cut back on its advertising. Should the partwork publishers not be cutting back too? Not in the view of Matthew Lebus, who is in charge of marketing for Eglemoss. "TV is the number

With Mozart and mackerel, murder and microwaves, partwork publishers are banking on the quest for self-improvement



Clever packaging: books served in manageable chunks

one choice for promotions because it's impactful, emotive and intrusive. The national launch takes place in January, when it's approximately 25 per cent cheaper and we can catch everybody."

Mr Cavendish is extremely bullish about prospects for the current crop of titles and points to the experience in Australia, where he says a considerably deeper recession has given them no problems.

But partworks are definitely not as successful as they were in the Seventies. "They used to average 700,000 on part 1," says Edean Phillips, editorial director of Orbis, which publishes *The New You*. He expects a good partwork now to sell 350,000 copies of part 1. Others are less optimistic, suggesting that partworks such as *Creative Knitting*, which sold 463,000,

how. Hence the gimmicks: first there was the give-away part 2, then came the binders, packs and cassettes. Marshall Cavendish has relaunched *The Great Composers*, "revised and updated" (presumably they found some extra symphonies), complete with a CD for £4.99. The Eglemoss team still swear by the ring-binder. "Research has shown, much to my personal amazement, that people like sorting things out and refiling," Mr Cavendish says. "Binders increase loyalty and make people decide whether mentally they are making a committed purchase."

GETTING them hooked, or more properly "retention down the line", is as crucial in successful partwork publishing as in fishing. Natural curiosity, combined with Tom Pickering's blandishments, may be enough to make 200,000 people spend £1.40 on the free binder and part 1 of *The Art of Fishing*. If it is as invaluable as the ads suggest, then surely sales of part 52 should be as high. Publishers reckon that about 75 per cent of readers will hold over to part 2, and a further 75 per cent to part 3. Figures stabilise in the teens, so a partwork that sold 180,000 of the first issue should still be selling 30,000 at the end of a run of 120 parts. A successful partwork can generate more than £5 million.

"Buying a partwork is an investment," says Keith McVane, the marketing director for Marshall Cavendish. "New Year launches are most effective in terms of buying patterns because people make a resolution and try to do something new." Like other New Year resolutions, the success rate is at best partial.

NICOLA MURPHY
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'Research has shown that people like sorting things out and refiling'

First she read *The Times*.
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Out of a total readership of 1.2 million, no less than 89% of *The Times*' readers own their own home. And at any one time, 124,000 of them are hoping to move within the next six months — possibly into your home.

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SELL IT THROUGH
THE TIMES

Source: NRS Oct 1989 - Sept 1990

BRIEFING

Invasive acting

XENOPHOBES on Broadway should brace themselves: no fewer than a dozen London shows are scheduled to travel to New York during 1991. Besides *Miss Saigon* (advance sales for which are approaching £20 million), other British successes expected on or off Broadway include *Racing Demon*, *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *Kean*, *Our Country's Good*, *Henry IV* and *Five Guys Named Moe*. They will join *Buddy and Shadowlands*, both already on the Great White Way.

Adieu acronym

A SMALL piece of music trade history happens today with the disappearance from record sleeves of the CBS label, and the reappearance of an old friend, Columbia. Since 1965 the likes of Bob Dylan, Michael Jackson, George Michael and Bruce Springsteen have appeared under the CBS sign, but from now on they will be accompanied on record covers by Columbia instead. The switch is part of the corporate name change following the acquisition of CBS Records United Kingdom Limited by Sony, with all the old CBS company names in Britain disappearing by February 1.



Jackson: turning Japanese?

Be-spoke

IN AN attempt to avoid a reputation of the future surrounding Peter Sellers' production of *The Magic Flute* last year — from which the dialogue was notoriously excised — Glyndebourne has given more details of how it will be "developed" this summer. The opera will now be given in English and an element of the dialogue will be included. Other Sussex treats this year include new productions of *Cost of a Rattle* by Trevor Nunn (Simon Rattle conducting) and of *La Cenerentola* by Nicholas Hytner.

Last chance

ALEXANDER Grant's life will be simplified as the present glut of *The Nutcracker* ends. He has had to remember each day whether he is playing Drosselmeyer with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden (last performances tomorrow and Thursday) or tipsy cousin Vladimir with English National Ballet at the Festival Hall (ends Saturday). Birmingham Royal Ballet's splendid new production at the Birmingham Hippodrome also finishes on Saturday. Scottish Ballet's *Nutcracker*, this week in Dublin, continues one further week at the King's, Aberdeen, until January 19.

THEATRE

Now guess who's coming to dinner

On a typically bustling October afternoon in New York's Pennsylvania Station, Wallace Shawn, actor, author and son of former *New Yorker* editor William Shawn, is being mistaken repeatedly for the film comedy actor Rick Moranis. "Hey, man, you were great in *Ghosts*," call out two friendly youths, somewhat surprised when Shawn replies — gently — that he was not in that movie. Later, on the train which is taking him to Boston and me to New Haven, Connecticut, an eavesdropper makes the right connection: "Are you still having great conversations?" the gentleman asks, alluding to Shawn's theatre and film, with André Gregory, *My Dinner With André*. "Well, I don't know, I don't know," responds Shawn, who is in his forties. "It's not for me to say."

Simple answers do not come readily to Shawn, and his career, no doubt accordingly, defies simple categorisation. On the one hand, he is the ubiquitous character actor, often used for laughs, in films such as *Manhattan* (as Diane Keaton's husband), *The Princess Bride*, *The Moderns*, and *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills*. On the other, he is responsible for a line-up of plays — *A Thought In Three Parts*, *Marie and Bruce*, and *Aunt Dan and Lemon* — that have been dividing audiences for over two decades.

If its New York reception last November is any gauge, Shawn's current solo play at the Royal Court, *The Fever*, looks set to follow suit. While one American critic derided it as "an orgy of self-flagellation that even Woody Allen might find a bit rich", another hailed it as "a profoundly engaging and provocative journey through the awakening of a pampered man's conscience". Some may doubt whether a 100-minute confessional monologue, performed without props, a programme, or a curtain call, even merits the term "theatre". Others will ponder why more dramatists do not raise the questions, personal and political, that give *The Fever* its fevered pulse.

New York actor and Off-Broadway hit playwright Wallace Shawn, back in Britain with his latest one-man show, talks to Matt Wolf

The Fever tells an unusual tale — Latin America as the catalyst for one privileged New York liberal's breakdown — and it has an equally unexpected performance history. Shawn began acting *The Fever* last January in friends' apartments before non-paying audiences of invited guests and the evening sometimes concluded with a meal during which the play could be discussed, or not. David Hare and Simon Curtis are two people who have hosted the work in this country, and producer Joseph Papp and author David Leavitt are among many who have done the same in America. Shawn's reasoning, as he explains it, was to try to make theatre happen "outside of the ordinary system".

Not, Shawn is quick to emphasise, that those who see *The Fever* in the confines of a theatre "are getting a second-best experience; it's just a different experience. I have reached the point where I know I can do it myself for only so much longer before I will lose the ability to do it all, so I have decided to open it up to more people."

The Fever may well sound different to English ears than it did to Shawn's fellow New Yorkers, since it is fuelled by two qualities — anger and the desire for political debate — which are harder to come by in the complacent commercial atmosphere of the American theatre. Shawn has largely avoided those pressures — he has never, for example, had a play on Broadway — but he is aware of the consensualism to

American culture which is less deep-rooted here.

"The theatre world [in America] is so far inside the consensus that it seems just ludicrously far-fetched to imagine that theatre could be a venue in which those individuals outside it could find each other and talk. The theatre-going audience is the most conservative audience. It is more conservative than the audience for dance, movies, novels. The people who are slowly beginning to figure out that they do not fit into the consensus are not people who have formed the theatre-going habit."

Shawn's plays, therefore, may seem most subversive on home turf. Imagine the shock of a New York theatre-goer attending *Marie and Bruce* Off-Broadway in 1979 and expecting to embrace the return to the stage of then-TV star Louise Lasser, only to encounter a scatological two-hander about domesticity gone nightmarishly sour. No less surprise was registered in 1985 when Shawn's *Aunt Dan and Lemon*, which had its world premiere at the Royal Court, transferred Off-Broadway. Few attracted to the evening by the prospect of seeing Oscar-winner Linda Hunt (*The Year of Living Dangerously*) knew they would find a play mercilessly dissecting the presence of fascism in our midst today.

Following completion of his degree at Harvard, Shawn did postgraduate work in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Magdalen College, Oxford. The experience proved formative. "I had an incredible time because they stretched my brain in the most marvellous way. Even though it could have been humiliating to realise I was not really very bright, it was somehow more thrilling to realise that it was possible to whip one's brain into improved shape."

Is he a different writer, therefore, than he would have been otherwise? "Totally. I'm not an intellectual and I'm not that smart, but I do sort of make use in my writing of a kind of moron's



Shawn: "a moron's eye view of subjects commonly approached by people with greater minds."

eye view of subjects that are commonly approached by people with greater minds. In doing that, I must admit I do make use of whatever training in using my mind that I have."

The Fever, which ends its month-long British tour at the National Theatre in February, is about a man — obviously some version of Shawn himself — coming to a realisation of the facts of poverty and torture and instinctual human venality in a hotel room in an unnamed Latin American country. Shawn has visited Latin America on several

occasions, and the trips clearly form part of the changes which, he says, have shaped his writing of late. "There has been some change in the direction away from the American tendency to see absolutely everything that happens as an isolated incident that happens for ad hoc reasons."

The result, once again, feeds a kinship with England: "We don't have a political debate in the United States in the way England has; we have occasional idiosyncratic outbursts by individual writers who scream out into the void some very, very personal and

idiosyncratic creed. It is well known — practically a cliché — that in Europe it is assumed a writer takes an interest in the affairs of his society. Here, it is considered polluting to one's artistic work to have any political commitment that might come out of the work. That is considered a sure sign that the writer is a Stalinist hack creating propaganda."

Wallace Shawn opens in his one-man show, *The Fever*, tonight at the Theatre Upstairs at the Royal Court, Sloane Square, London SW1 071 (071-730 2554).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Tons of ideas on offer for this year's anniversary waltz

THIS will inevitably be Mozart's year, but it would be a pity if other musical anniversaries were to be crowded out not, of course, because there is any special importance in numbers with noughts on them, but because centenaries are a handy excuse for celebrating composers who are otherwise overlooked, and also because sometimes such occasions help to bring about a more permanent shift in valuation and taste. That happened with the great Handel festivals of 1974 and 1987; more recently Satie, Ives and Zemlinzky have been among composers to benefit from centenary exposure.

Very possibly the Grétry revival would have received some im-

petus if the 250th anniversary of his birth had not coincided with the 200th of Mozart's death. Born and brought up in Liège, Grétry may yet win through thanks to small-country pride, though he spent most of his life in Paris, as the leading composer of comic opera in the last two decades before the 1789 Revolution.

His first success, *Le huron*, was produced at Burton last year; other works, especially *Zémire et Azor* and *Richard Cœur-de-lion*, sometimes appear. But, since Grétry produced roughly an opera a year from 1768 to the end of the century, there remains a great deal to rediscover.

Even so, his star currently

shines brighter than that of Johann Gottlieb Naumann, who was also born in 1741 and was based in Dresden. His success as an opera composer there brought him to the attention of the Scandinavian monarchs, and so enabled him to establish a record, presumably still unbroken, in setting librettos in Swedish and Danish as well as Italian and French, quite apart from the German texts he set in songs and cantatas. Anyone planning a Naumann renaissance might look hopefully for EC funding.

Then the generation of 1791 includes another much-travelled German, Giacomo Meyerbeer, inventor of French grand opera and

of the press conference. Both these achievements are perhaps sufficiently often resurrected, but his contemporary, Ferdinand Hérold, deserves some investigation, if only so that we can find out what happens in his *Zampa* after its brilliant overture. This work and his other alleged masterpieces, *Le pré aux clercs*, were both written for the Opéra-Comique. Had Hérold not died soon afterwards, at the age of 41, he might have become one of Meyerbeer's rivals at the Opéra.

Leaping swiftly over the Carl Czerny (1791-1857) of so many piano studies (24 Five-Finger Exercises op.777, *L'infatigable, grande étude de vélocité*

op.779...), one arrives at another French composer whose operas are neglected: Emmanuel Chabrier. His sesquicentenary is being marked by a performance of *Gwendoline* at Hull University next month, but someone ought to try out *Le roi malgré lui*, as well as the earlier works, *L'hoïe* (already wonderfully revived and recorded) and *Une éducation manquée*.

Also born in 1841, Giovanni Sgambati merits some attention as one of the first Italian composers since the Baroque to concentrate on non-operatic music. His works include two symphonies, two piano quintets, a quartet and a Requiem mass which was used at

some Italian royal funerals.

There is also work to be done on behalf of those born in 1891. The Bliss Trust is planning a variety of performances, recordings and publications in honour of the late Master of the Queen's Music, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is launching this month a series of Prokofiev concerts.

Finally, are there any champions to be found for the causes of K.B. Jirik, the Czech composer of symphonies and chamber music who spent his last 25 years in exile in Chicago, or for Roland-Manuel, pupil of Ravel and ghost-writer for Stravinsky?

PAUL GRIFFITHS

TELEVISION

Settle down for the dressing up

Costume dramas are still a television audience draw, Anthea Gerrie reports

AFTER a season that brings on an overdose of nostalgia for Victorian Christmas-card life, there is nothing the nation likes better than a good costume drama to curl up with in midwinter.

The BBC and the independent networks oblige, but in these frugal times there are fewer frock coats and furbelows about. Where ten years ago audiences could have looked forward to a hefty helping of the Great Classic Serial, today there are instead three or four parts of something less schmaltzy and more politically relevant.

Parnell and the Englishwoman, beginning this week, is a piece of BBC 2 programming on the Irish "troubles"; in this case a nicely dressed-up history lesson by Hugh Leonard that can be counted on to bring in its fair share of foreign sales.

"We do have to consider the overseas buyer who gives us our only real opportunity of

offsetting production costs," says Mark Shivas, head of BBC Drama, who is not averse to classic works but is conscious of the dent they make in his annual budget for 250 hours of drama.

At £600,000 per hour plus, costume drama is at least one-third more expensive than contemporary works. You have not just the cost of the costumes themselves, but sets, makeup, wigs, old cars, carriages — and all the attendant costs of clearing from the location every sign of modern life from television aerials to double yellow lines.

Nor is the United States a goldmine when it comes to recouping the costs, he contends. "Public Service Broadcasting is the principal customer, and it will not pay more than \$200,000 per hour (£102,000). By the time we have paid actors' residuals, this is halved. Australia and New Zealand pay even less and by the time you get down to markets like Chile, you are lucky if you see three and sixpence (17p)."

Fear of upsetting foreign

buyers has made British network executives think in terms of shorter serials, he admits. *Brideshead Revisited* and *Jewel in the Crown*, ten and 13 episodes respectively, were critical successes but ratings flops overseas.

"Four is currently a fashionable number — it allows the Americans to package a work as a twice times two-hour show," says Shivas, adding that: "It is hard to find good, hot directors who will commit themselves selectively to two years' work."

This winter, BBC viewers hankering to escape to a lost era must content themselves with a rerun of *Bleak House* and the aforementioned *Parnell*, which has required bearding, padding and frock-coating to turn Trevor Eve, of contemporary matinee-idol looks, into the stern Irish political leader of the signature role.

The actor feels he may linger too vividly in the national consciousness as private investigator Eddie Shocstring, the hit television role he created a decade ago, and, more recently, as the philanthropic novelist Felix in Andrea Newman's *A Sense of Guilt*. The padding and the hair-dye transform him well enough physically, though the plot marches him back to the adulteress's bed, where he dallies with Francesca Annis.

"At 39, an actor gets cast as a philanderer," he says. "In your twenties you play the strong and the true; then at 35-plus the flawed element creeps in and you play philanderers until you age sufficiently to play the father of teenage problem sons."

It was the flawed aspects of Parnell's nature which drew Eve. "It is a hell of a part: the man had no self-doubt whatever and was classically blinded by a love in which he had an absolute belief. Not sympathetic, perhaps, but courageous — Hugh Leonard was careful not to encourage false sympathy or sentimentality where it would have been tempting to do so."

He enjoys acting in costume: "Because it is what first attracts you to acting as a child; it is also a most helpful prop for getting away from your own rhythms and energies. By the time I had had my hair parted, a frock coat put on, the collar set and the stick tucked under my arm every morning, I was routinely quite set to play the part."

Costume drama fans will also be catered for with a rendering of Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden* stories. "They are even more expensive to produce than drama entirely set in Britain," says Shivas. "They take us all over Europe, requiring extensive research and expense to achieve authenticity. What was worn in Germany and Poland in the Twenties and Thirties is very different from what was worn over here."

He promises, however, that budgetary considerations will never signal the demise of period pieces in even the most stringent times. "Staging classic work is a BBC tradition, even if we have passed the era of the annual Great British Classic Serial. It is older viewers who demand a steady diet of costume drama, and demographic growth now lies very much in their direction."

● *Parnell and the Englishwoman* is to be broadcast in four parts on BBC 2, beginning on Wednesday at 9.25pm



Heavily disguised? Trevor Eve, Francesca Annis in the Hugh Leonard drama *Parnell and the Englishwoman*

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THE TIMES
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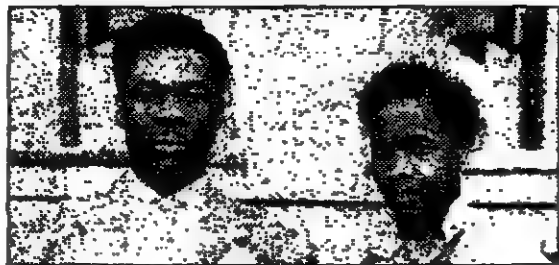
6.00 Ceebe: BBC Breakfast News with Nicholas Witchell and Jill Dando.
9.00 News, regional news and weather. 9.05 Brainwave. Andy Craig hosts the quiz with contestants are helped by celebrities and experts through puzzles based on hobbies, leisure and lifestyle.
9.25 Dish of the Day. More culinary tips from Rosemary Moon.
9.30 People Today. Adrian Mills and Debi Jones take a look at the lives of people across the UK. Includes the Kitchen Cal phone-in.
10.00 News, regional news and weather. 10.05 Playdays. 10.25 Rupert.
10.35 People Today.
11.00 News, regional news and weather.
11.05 Kinky. Robert Kinky-Slik chairs a discussion on the Gulf situation. 11.45 Before Noon includes Tim Grundy with the Brainwave quiz winner.
12.00 News, regional news and weather. 12.05 Wildlife Game: The Lions Are Coming. Fergus Keeling presents classic moments from the Natural History Unit archives (r). 12.50 Scene Today. 12.55 Regional news and weather.
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Hayton. Weather.
1.30 Neighbours. (Ceebe). 1.50 Going for Gold. 2.15 Starry and Hutch. A country star is being harassed by an anonymous caller - enter the 'tacky' tests (r).
2.00 Head of the Class. American high school comedy series.
3.25 The Jetsons. Cartoon. 3.50 Forget-Me-Not-Farm. 4.05 Jimbo and the Jet Set (r). 4.10 Jackanory. Sylvester McCoy with the first of a five-part reading of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. 4.25 The New Adventures of Mighty Mouse (r). 4.35 Thundercats.
5.00 Newsround. 5.05 Blue Peter. (Ceebe).
5.35 Neighbours (r). (Ceebe). Northern Ireland: Sportswide 5.40 Inside Lillies.
6.00 Six O'Clock News with Peter Sissons. Weather.
6.30 Regional News Magazines. Northern Ireland: Neighbours.
7.00 Wogan.
7.30 Watchdog Special: If Only I'd Known What to Do. John Stapleton and Lynn Faulstich Wood, using practical first aid advice and demonstrations, show how a range of injuries can be tackled.
8.00 May to December. Return of the lame romantic comedy with Anton Rodgers as a middle-aged solicitor with a considerably younger girlfriend, now played by Lesley Dunlop. (Ceebe).



Upstaged by Victoria Stone: a giant octopus (8.30pm)

8.30 Wildlife on One: Devilfish.
 © CHOICE: Fronted by Sir David Attenborough, who has the disavowed look of a man still recovering from a blockbuster series, the natural history half-hour begins a new series by looking at the life of the octopus. Not just any old octopus but giant versions of the species, up to 16 feet high, which inhabit the Pacific waters off the coast of Seattle. As so often happens with the nature series of the show come near to being upstaged by the camera team, in this case Victoria Stone and Mark Deeble. Sensational underwater photography is climaxed by a sequence in which one of the 16-foot invertebrates embraces Stone in its suckers and pulls the regulator from her mouth. But this is an affectionate rather than a hostile act by a creature of gentleness and high intelligence which refuses to conform to the devilfish of mythology. (Ceebe).
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Michael Buerk. (Ceebe). Regional news and weather.
9.30 Panorama: Behind the Desert Shield. David Lomax reports on the effect on Saudi society of King Fahd's decision to invite in western forces.
10.10 See for Yourself. Each region presents, as part of the BBC's annual report to the television licence-payer, its own review of its work in television and radio over the past 12 months.
10.40 Match of the Day: The Road to Wembley. Highlights of tonight's FA Cup third-round game between Manchester United, beginning their defence of the trophy, and QPR at Old Trafford. Northern Ireland: 10.45 29 Bedford Street. 11.15-12.05am Barry Douglas Direct.
11.25 Facing Up to AIDS: Sex in the 90s (r). 11.55 Weather. Northern Ireland: 12.05-12.50 Match of the Day.

8.00 News.
8.15 Red Sails and Shovel Waters. The story of an 83-year-old Thames spritboat barge (r).
8.30 Daytime On Two. Educational programmes.
2.00 News and weather followed by 'Storytime' (r). 2.15 Songs of Praise from the Cathedral Church of St Patrick in Armagh (r). (Ceebe). 2.50 Behind the Scenes. Adam meets Ian McEwan, the man behind the character Lesley.
3.00 News and weather followed by Darts. Tony Gibbs introduces action from the Embassy world professional championship. 3.50 News, regional news and weather.
4.00 Catchword. Paul Coia hosts the longest-running quiz.
4.30 Behind the Headlines. American author and critic Paul Fussell talks about the way this century has been fought, reported and remembered.
5.00 Film: *Turaz's Magic Fountain* (1949, b/w). This enjoyable frolic marks Lex Barker's initiation as the jungle hero. He and Jane (Brenda Joyce) go in search of a lost aviator and along the way chance upon a magic fountain of youth. Directed by Les Sholem.
6.10 DEF II: First Bite. Terry Gilliam of *Monty Python* here presents the six winning films in the First Bite 1980/81 Student Animation Competition.
6.50 Cricket: Third Test. Highlights of the fourth day's play between Australia and England at Sydney, introduced by Richie Benaud.



Called to the forces: Keith Barron and actress Edna (7.25pm)

7.20 Black Britain: Mother Country.
 © CHOICE: A story of the lives of British African and Caribbean population is told through the personal memories of four families chosen to represent a variety of background and experience. They are headed by a great-grandmother from Liverpool whose people settled here in Victorian times, a Jamaican who was recruited for the British army, a Barbadian who came to work for London Transport and a law lecturer from Ghana. The first programme (of six) adopts a chronological structure, setting the four family stories against the mother country's need for immigrants to augment the fighting forces of two world wars and to provide bus drivers and nurses in peacetime. Although the difficulties of settling in an alien country and cases of race prejudice are not ignored, the families display a creditable lack of bitterness. The talking heads are augmented with archive material, some of it hilariously quaint.
8.10 Horizon: Sudden Death.
 © CHOICE: A film by Jeremy Taylor investigates why so many apparently fit people die suddenly from heart failure. Examples are drawn from Thai labourers working in Singapore and refugees camps in Thailand but sudden cardiac death has also killed an American basketball star and causes 50,000 fatalities a year in Britain. There is the apparent paradox that an Italian immigrant community in Pennsylvania which consumed huge quantities of fatty food suffered less heart trouble than their city-dwelling children. Taylor suggests that the phenomenon has received less than its due attention, although there is no shortage of theories. One of the more plausible relates heart deaths to stress, particularly when associated with cultural upheaval. Thus Japanese living abroad are more prone to heart failure than those who stay at home. But vitamin deficiency and genetic factors are also suggested. (Ceebe).
9.00 Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. In the concluding episode of Jeanette Winterson's series, Jess seems to have recovered from the loss of Melanie and finds comfort in the affections of her new friend, Katy. However, she is rejected by her mother and the church when she returns to Accrington (r).
9.55 Bird Detectives. From an outsider's point of view, the RSPB might seem a peaceable establishment quietly plugging away for the rights of winged creatures, but in reality it houses a crack squad of detectives dedicated to bringing bird and egg thieves to justice. This programme follows the team for a year and shows the work involved in catching egg stealers and exotic bird traders.
10.30 Newsnight with Jeremy Paxman.
11.15 Darts. Highlights of the Embassy world professional championship at the Lakeside Country Club.
12.15am Weather.
12.20 Behind the Headlines. See 4.30. Ends at 12.55.

6.00 TV-am.
9.25 Runaway. Richard Madeley presents the high flying quiz. The first of a new series. 9.55 Thames News and weather.
10.00 The Time... The Place... Mike Scott chairs a topical discussion.
10.40 This Morning. Magazine series on family matters presented by Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan.
12.05 Rosie and Jim. John Cunliffe presents the children's programme. 12.25 Home and Away. Australian drama serial about a couple and their foster children. 12.55 Thames News and weather.
1.00 News at One and weather.
1.20 Thames Help. Jackie Sprockley and John Murray with a preview of this week's Get Fit for 81 campaign. 1.50 A Country Practice. 2.20 Snooker: The Mercantile Credit Classic. Action from the international Centre in Bournemouth.
3.15 ITN News headlines. 3.20 Thames News headlines. 3.25 Families. Soap involving a family divided between Britain and Australia.
3.55 Johnnie Walker and the New Teacher. New children's series starring Vicky Graham. 4.00 Nelly the Elephant. Lulu and Tony Robinson provide the voices. 4.10 Toucan Tacs. New cartoon series. 4.20 T-Bag and the Rings of Olympus. New series starring Georgina Hale. 4.45 Count Duckula. Animated adventures.
5.10 Who's the Boss? Role-reversal American sitcom.
5.40 News (Ceebe) and weather.
5.55 Thames Help. Jackie Sprockley with advice on getting fit.
6.00 Home and Away (r).
6.30 Thames News and weather.
7.00 Wish You Were Here...? Judith Chalmers launches the new Tourism for Tomorrow Award for environmentally aware resorts. The first one goes to Garmisch in Austria for a project which has reduced pollution in its lakes, and the next few weeks will see prizes for British resorts. The travel team also visits Chicago and looks at the possibilities for holiday flying from Stansted with its new passenger terminal. (Oracle).
7.30 Coronation Street. Wit and drama with the 'Rovers' regulars. (Oracle).
8.00 The Rona Lucas Show. New series with ventriloquist Rona Lucas and Scorch the Dragon. Tonight's guests include Daniel Rosen with his comic juggling act, American singer Whitney Houston, the Chen Brothers and off-the-wall impressions from Peter Pyper.
8.30 World in Action: A Life of Pain. A report on the dangers of permanent back trouble being caused by a back x-ray, called a myelogram, which uses an oil-based dye.
9.00 No Job for a Lady. Sir Kenneth Williams. New series of the enjoyable comedy starring Penelope Keith as socialist MP Jean Price. She and a fellow MP decide to cleanse a local newspaper's shelves of pornographic material, but the two cannot agree on what is offensive. Also stars George Baker, taking a break from Inspector Wexford. (Oracle).
9.30 About Face: Tourist Attraction. New series of one-off stories with Maureen Lipman in various forms of disguise. Tonight she plays Louise, a tour guide who tries to persuade her coach driver Ken (Keith Barron) to speed up the journey so that she can meet her German boyfriend who is in town for just one evening. (Oracle).
10.00 News at Ten (Oracle) and weather. 10.30 Thames News and weather.
10.40 Thames Special: A Question for London - Policing the Capital. Nick Ross presents a studio discussion about the Metropolitan Police in which acting commissioner Sir John Deller, answers questions on the reality behind London's apparent crime wave and whether the Met is able for money in the light of its increasingly high amounts of funding and resources.
11.40 Snooker: The Mercantile Credit Classic. Tony Francis introduces further coverage from Bournemouth.
1.00 The Winds of War. Episode four of the second world war mini-series (r).
3.00 Antiques (Crimes of Passion). A French drama about a young boy's obsession with his attractive mother. He is determined to monopolise her and dreams up a wicked plan in his devious mind. Starring Jacqueline Parant and Francois Marthouret.
4.00 American College Football. Virginia vs North Carolina.
5.00 ITN Morning News. Ends at 6.00.



Full speed ahead: Keith Barron and Maureen Lipman (9.30pm)

6.00 The Art of Landscape. New age and classical music with soothing natural images.
6.20 Business Daily.
6.30 The Channel Four Daily.
9.25 Schools.
12.00 All Muck And Magic. Repeat of the popular organic gardening series, introduced by Alan Gear (r). (Teletext).
12.30 Business Daily. Financial and business news service.
1.00 Sesame Street. Educational fun for pre-school children.
2.00 Film: *Lady Godiva Rides Again* (1951, b/w). Sharp satire of British moral attitudes with Dame Dora and Pauline Staud as beauty queens who become involved in a sleazy publicity stunt. The two are entered in a beauty contest sponsored by a soap company and the result has been fixed in Dora's favour. However, Dora throws the competition and Staud goes on to win, much to the chagrin of her father (Stanley Holloway) and boyfriend (George Cole). From this point, she believes she is on her way to becoming a film star as she is awarded a contract, but things go awry when new boyfriend comes on the scene and she is entangled in a scandal. The picture was censored by Hollywood for too much talk and nudity but Irish and British censors were lenient and it received a U certificate here. Watch out for cameo roles from Sid James, Jimmy Young, Dora Bryan and Alastair Sim. Directed by Frank Launder.
3.50 Jealousy. Animation from Bulgaria.
4.00 Travels. In the first of a new series, Simon Hoggart takes an alternative look at Savannah, Georgia (r).
4.30 Countdown. The semi-final of the championship of champions in this number and word game. Presented by Richard Whitely with Gyles Brandreth.
5.00 The Late Late Show. Gay Byrne presents the lively music and chat show from Dublin.
6.00 Roseanne. More wackadoodie comedy with the outsize couple, Roseanne Barr and John Goodman (r).
6.30 Tonight With Jonathan Ross. Among the guests is Alan Dershowitz, Claus von Bülow's successful defence lawyer.
7.00 Channel 4 News. (Teletext).
7.50 Comment followed by Weather.
8.00 Brookside. Soap set in a Liverpool close. (Teletext).
8.30 My Two Dads. Poor American comedy about a young girl with two possible fathers.



Passing a sign of the times: a Spanish flamenco dancer (8.00pm)

9.00 Spain: In the Shadow of the Sun.
 © CHOICE: A portrait of post-Franco Spain uses a favourite television device of gauging the mood of a country through profiles of ordinary people. Recent examples include BBC series on France, Italy and the Soviet Union, all more ambitious than the Spanish project which is limited to only four programmes. The chosen citizens are the captain of a parachute regiment, a teenage girl, a magazine editor and, in tonight's film, a rancher on a bull-ringing farm in Andalusia. If Diego is in any way typical, Spain remains a deeply conservative country. A busy, jovial man who tends to take life as he finds it, Diego regrets the passing of Franco and adheres to the countryman's philosophy that 'lack of rain is more important than changes in government'. The film is partly, too, a profile of Diego's boss, a woman, who is only marginally less a traditionalist and seems disinclined to bang any feminist drum.
10.00 The Managers: A Man's Game. The first episode in a repeat of both series of Stan Hey's plausible drama about a woman who manages a second division football team, starring Charlie Lunghi. Gabriella Benson has a passion for football. When she takes over her favourite club, she gives the club chairman a piece of her mind which, together with the promise of her rich father's money, persuades him to consider her for team manager. Suddenly her dream comes true but she must first deal with hostility from players and press. (r). (Teletext).
11.00 Redemptive History. Desmond Bell wrote and directed this documentary about the traditions of radical Ulster Protestants as discovered by pupils at a Londonderry Protestant secondary school.
12.05am Khomeini's Boys. Danish story about the experiences of Iranian boy soldiers in the Iran-Iraq war, looking at the similarities between Hitler Youth and members of fundamentalist groups. Ends at 12.50am.

TV VARIATIONS

ANGLIA

As London except: 1.30pm-1.50pm Discovering Gardens. 6.25-7.00pm Anglia News. 10.40pm Anglia Reports. 11.10pm The Winds of War. 11.30pm The Winds of War. 11.50pm The Winds of War. 12.10pm The Winds of War. 12.30pm The Winds of War. 12.50pm The Winds of War. 1.00pm The Winds of War. 1.20pm The Winds of War. 1.40pm The Winds of War. 1.55pm The Winds of War. 2.15pm The Winds of War. 2.35pm The Winds of War. 2.55pm The Winds of War. 3.15pm The Winds of War. 3.35pm The Winds of War. 3.55pm The Winds of War. 4.15pm The Winds of War. 4.35pm The Winds of War. 4.55pm The Winds of War. 5.15pm The Winds of War. 5.35pm The Winds of War. 5.55pm The Winds of War. 6.15pm The Winds of War. 6.35pm The Winds of War. 6.55pm The Winds of War. 7.15pm The Winds of War. 7.35pm The Winds of War. 7.55pm The Winds of War. 8.15pm The Winds of War. 8.35pm The Winds of War. 8.55pm The Winds of War. 9.15pm The Winds of War. 9.35pm The Winds of War. 9.55pm The Winds of War. 10.15pm The Winds of War. 10.35pm The 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BUSINESS

MONDAY JANUARY 7 1991

Executive Editor
David Brewerton

Insurers at risk as costs increase

By MARTIN BARROW
AND NEIL BENNETT

INSURERS are at even greater risk of heavy storm losses than last year due to the soaring cost of catastrophe reinsurance policies. They have therefore breathed a collective sigh of relief after weekend storms caused only modest damage compared with the severe gales last February.

Roy Randall, spokesman for Royal Insurance, said: "Some areas were affected by winds up to force six or seven, which were not much stronger than those on Christmas day. That is quite mild compared with last year and with 1987."

Tony Baker, spokesman for the Association of British Insurers, added: "We have not had many reports of structural damage."

But insurance companies fear that the strong winds of the past two weeks signal another long, hard winter of extreme weather, that will result in high levels of claims, and give warning that higher premiums are likely.

Eagle Star, a subsidiary of BAT Industries, has become the latest composite to announce a 10 per cent increase on its buildings insurance rates. The increase becomes effective from February 1.

Insurers will not, however, benefit from the additional premium income since the money is needed to pay massive hikes in reinsurance costs. The cost of reinsurance policies taken out through Lloyd's insurance market is said to have increased by up to 500 per cent.

Catastrophe reinsurance policies are used by the composites to protect themselves against massive claims from unexpected natural disasters.

The insurer pays the first part of a disaster claim, while the rest over a certain limit is settled by the reinsurer.

Figures from the Association of British Insurers show last winter's storms produced claims of £2.08 billion, although most was paid by reinsurers.

The reinsurance rate increases have been forced through by underwriting syndicates anxious to recoup some of their losses. The underwriters have also insisted insurance companies pay a larger part of any claim.

This suggests they will have to suffer the full cost of all but the worst weather damage. This weekend's gales, although bad, are not expected to trigger any catastrophe reinsurance policies. Royal Insurance accepts claims up to a total of £35 million before turning to reinsurers.

The composites, including Commercial Union, Guardian Royal Exchange and Royal Insurance, are praying for a year free from natural disasters to allow them to bolster their depleted reserves and return to profits.

Forecasters from City analysts suggest all the insurers except Commercial Union will report a loss for 1990.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.9340 (+0.0117)
W German mark 2.9107 (+0.0326)
Exchange index 94.2 (+1.0)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1659.5 (-25.7)
FT-SE 100 2126.1 (-34.3)
New York Dow Jones 2566.09 (-63.12)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 24069.18 (+220.47)

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.59	2.44
Austria Sch	21.40	20.00
Belgium Fr	62.75	58.75
Canada C\$	2.35	2.20
Denmark Kr	11.68	10.58
Finland Mk	7.39	6.84
France Fr	10.26	9.88
Germany Dm	3.04	2.85
Greece Dr	325	305
Hong Kong \$	15.62	14.85
India Rupee	1136	1085
Italy Lira	2285	2145
Japan Yen	274.50	258.50
Netherlands Gld	3.42	3.21
Norway Kr	11.88	10.88
Portugal Esc	20.60	19.75
South Africa R	5.25	4.75
Spain Ptas	191	179
Sweden Kr	11.30	10.71
Switzerland Fr	2.57	2.41
Turkey Lira	5900	5400
USA \$	2.055	1.915
Yugoslavia Dnr	30.00	25.00

Rates for small denomination bank only as supplied by Barclay Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques.
Retail Price Index: 130.0 (November)

Base rates could be cut this month

By COLIN NARBROUGH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE prime minister's forecast that interest rates are "overwhelmingly likely" to follow inflation down will reinforce a growing conviction in the financial markets that the government could still cut base rates by the end of January.

John Major's assessment of the economic outlook on TV-am's *Frost on Sunday* programme was far more benign than the view taken by most City analysts and was seen as part of the government's offensive to talk up the pound.

Further gains for sterling against the mark, anchor currency of the exchange-rate mechanism, would bring the pound closer to a position in which a modest cut in interest rates becomes possible. The first cut of the year may be only half a point but could be one point.

A spate of interviews last week by Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, and Mr Major pushed the pound up more than three pence

to DM2.9107, almost allowing it to escape from its position as weakest ERM currency. Mr Lamont will underline the government's commitment to a healthy exchange rate at the meeting of the National Economic Development Council on Wednesday, where he will be confronted by more evidence of the depth of the recession.

As a result of the delay in cutting rates, markets are becoming convinced the government is serious about the ERM discipline and that sterling will not be devalued. This greater credibility would allow modest cuts in rates without reducing the value of the pound.

The strong incentive for an interest rate cut by the end of the month is the setting of annual mortgage rates by the Halifax, the building society. But an early cut would have little impact on the deepening recession and more cuts would be unlikely for months.

Retail prices data for December, published on Friday next week, are

forecast to show annual inflation slowing to about 9.5 per cent from 9.7 per cent in November and its 10.9 per cent peak in October. Trade figures the week after could also improve sentiment for the pound.

While reaffirming the government's commitment to keeping the pound squarely within its ERM bands, and defeating inflation, Mr Major yesterday voiced confidence that inflation is coming down. The signs were "unmistakable".

He said interest rates were "likely to follow the inflation rate down" as the inflation differential between Britain and its European partners narrowed, although ERM membership implied that interest rates would sometimes have to be raised to defend the pound.

On a possible sterling devaluation as part of a general realignment of the ERM, Mr Major said he neither foresaw nor hoped for such a development. He also ruled out moving sterling to narrower

fluctuation bands which would have allowed a lower central rate, for some time.

Although official third-quarter figures, to be issued tomorrow, are expected to show company finances still in poor shape, a survey by the Institute of Directors claims that directors have become less gloomy about the economy.

Half of those questioned were less optimistic than six months earlier, but this was 9 percentage points lower than in the last survey in October.

The latest survey, conducted in the two weeks after Mr Major became prime minister, says 27 per cent of directors were more optimistic about the economy, three percentage points more than in October.

The IoD linked the "modest upturn" in business confidence to the end of political uncertainty created by the Tory leadership contest. Peter Morgan, the IoD director general, said he hoped

market confidence in the government's monetary management would soon permit interest rates to begin to fall.

There was also some encouragement on the pay front. An Incomes Data Services report still points to wage deals stuck at about 9 to 10.5 per cent until there is a sustained fall in inflation, but identifies an important new split in pay awards, with a growing number of deals in recession-hit sectors paying well below inflation, while the bulk of January settlements remain above 10 per cent.

Philips, the electrical group, has told its 21,000 workers that there will be a four-month pay freeze, while Michelin, the tyre-maker, has ordered a three-month pay pause. But inflation-plus deals still exist, with a 12 per cent rise awarded at Dennis Eagle, the vehicle company group. Staff at the Shellhaven refinery have secured a two-year deal raising pay by 10.6 per cent from last October and inflation

plus 1.5 per cent in the second year. Central Statistical Office data on companies' profits and finances, to be published tomorrow, should indicate how bad the recession will be, with deteriorating finances likely to provoke severe retrenchment by the corporate sector, meaning more cuts in investment and jobs. In the second quarter, companies spent £10.2 billion more than they earned. This is forecast to have dropped by about £2.5 billion in the third quarter.

The one-point base rate cut in October did little to alleviate the pain being felt in the corporate sector. Domestic demand remains slack and the lift provided by exports is expected to weaken.

The effect of the counter-inflationary squeeze on the consumer will be seen in final retail sales figures for November today, likely to confirm the provisional 0.5 per cent decline in volume sales.

Economic View, page 19

Stores seen as main casualties in fresh surge of collapses

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A FURTHER surge in company failures, particularly retailers, is expected after a 120 cent rise in receiverships to 2,634 during 1990. Manufacturers, at 23.43 per cent, were next worst hit, while retailing was third at 17.45 per cent.

Mr Hayward said the sharp rise proved that many companies set up during the "credit-rich" atmosphere of the Eighties lacked the necessary structure and management skills to deal with the "adverse and harsh circumstances that now prevail".

The biggest surge in receiverships was in the South-west, which experienced a threefold increase. Scotland fared best with a rise of 40 per cent in absolute terms, the Southeast topped the list of failures where receivers were appointed. There were 1,354 receiverships there, more than half the national total. Next worst hit was the Midlands, with 327, followed by the Northeast with 306 and the Northwest with 266.

Among the banks, National Westminster was involved in the greatest number of receiverships, Barclays, which is of similar size, was entangled in 441 receiverships against 512

involving NatWest, Midland, with 342 companies in receivership on its books, outpaced Lloyds, which was tied up in 271 companies where receivers were appointed.

Mr Hayward suggested such a "purging process" was inevitable and desirable before the emergence of the single European market in 1992. "As always, in such adverse circumstances, there will be winners," he said. "Companies who think quickly on their feet, stay lean, and keep closely in touch with their bank will not only survive but flourish in a marketplace where weaker competitors have gone to the wall."

His views appear to be shared by the finance directors of Britain's 750 largest companies.

In a survey conducted on behalf of 31, the investment capital group, four out of five said companies were in better shape to survive than they were during the recession of the early Eighties.

Ninety-one per cent said companies concentrating on a single core business were better able to survive adversity than conglomerates.

Receivers steer stricken motor firms



JOHN Wheatley (above), corporate recovery partner at KPMG Peat Marwick in Birmingham, has the unhappy distinction of being the latest receiver to be appointed to a motor distributor. Since last Thursday he has been running Caldene Automobiles of Dudley Port, West Midlands. Less than a fortnight ago Colmore Depot, one of the largest private vehicle franchises in the West Midlands, was also placed in receivership.

Caldene, one of the largest independent dealers for Nissan and Fiat cars, has been trading on its Dudley site for 25 years, employs 60 people, and in 1989 had sales of £10 million. Mr Wheatley said: "Caldene, like many others, has fallen victim to the current high interest rates and the economic climate. Never-

theless, the company is still attracting customers and we have already had positive discussions with both Fiat and Nissan."

A rash of failures among substantial vehicle distribution groups indicates the pressure imposed by a downturn in new car sales, which are estimated to have fallen 12 per cent last year, combined with high interest rates. In several cases entrepreneurs who diversified found their franchises were no longer able to support borrowings on new enterprises. The heaviest pressure has fallen on retailers of foreign marques, which tend to be more favoured by the private buyer.

In September, partners of Cork Gully, the insolvency arm of Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, were appointed receivers

to Heath Garage (Newmarket), a Ford dealer, and its satellite Millford Garage, both part of the Willhire vehicle rental group which had become financially over-stretched by a venture into leisure investments. Buyers have been found for the garages and the rental business.

A month later, Peat Marwick was called in to rescue the Glen Henderson garage group, based in Ayr, Strathclyde, which had franchises for Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Ferrari, Volvo and Saab. Glen Henderson blamed borrowings to build an ice rink and conference centre in Ayr for that collapse.

As in other sectors, many of the businesses that are failing appear to have been well run, and as a result had little fat to trim when dearer borrowings pushed up their operating costs.

Saatchi boss pledges £1m investment

By OUR CITY STAFF

ROBERT Louis-Dreyfus, chief executive of Saatchi & Saatchi, is believed to have pledged to invest at least £1 million in the troubled advertising agency if bankers agree to refinance a £212 million Euroconvertible bond.

After talks between Saatchi and its advisers, SO Warburg and the Wall Street firm of Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette, the company is confident it can complete the refinancing before the end of the year although it admits there have been objections to its initial proposals from the 200-member banking syndicate.

Saatchi has borrowings of £189 million and must meet further coupon payments of about £47 million. The Euroconvertible preference stock is valued by the stock market at £71 million, barely one third of its 1993 conversion rate. The proposed refinancing would involve a cash injection of £100 million to fund an offer to bond holders that would include new shares.

Shake-up call by Lloyd's chairman

A REASSESSMENT of the financing and accounting structure at Lloyd's of London may be required to counter criticism of its policies and performance, says David Coleridge, its chairman.

Writing in the society's newsletter for the first time since he became chairman, he said: "Whatever steps are judged as necessary to repudiate our critics and to reassure our clients will be taken without hesitation. We must be able to face scrutiny by our most robust critics and we must convince them that the Lloyd's policy and its performance is without equal."

"This may suggest the need to undertake a fundamental reassessment of our underlying financing and accounting structure. If we collectively conclude that radical steps need to be taken to maintain our strength in the future I undertake we will do so."

Mr Coleridge said the financial strength of Lloyd's "cannot and must not simply be

presumed." He outlined plans to examine the role, management and cost of all central functions at Lloyd's to ensure they did not become "a manifestation of bureaucracy."

The strengths of Lloyd's included the diversity and number of businesses operating within the market; its perceived weaknesses included unco-ordinated business objectives, poor communications and a banking for the past.



Coleridge: 'face critics'

Powerboat sales roar ahead

By OUR CITY STAFF

BOATBUILDERS are reporting surprisingly buoyant sales of costly powerboats at the International Boat Show in London, with exports making up for any weakness in domestic demand.

Paid attendances in the first three days to Saturday night rose by 24 per cent on last year to 58,700. Attendances were also up about a quarter yesterday.

James Grazebrook, marketing chairman of the British Marine Industries Federation, which organises the show, said: "We are amazed at the way the industry appears to be bucking the trend."

Lewis Marine said it had booked £3.5 million of orders for its Riva powerboats so far, while Fairline and Princess reported powerboat sales up to last year's levels.

The powerboat business, whose sales are much more volatile than those of sailing boats, now accounts for 60 per cent of the domestic market.

Gavel raised for Nadir treasures

By ANGELA MACKAY

ADMINISTRATORS at Polly Peck International have decided that with debts of more than £1.3 billion, every little counts. So next month Phillips, the art auctioneer, will sell antiques worth at least £3 million, which are on display at the company's Berkeley Square headquarters.

Asil Nadir, the fresh fruit, electronics and hotel group's chairman and biggest shareholder, was an eclectic collector who stocked his offices with many precious and beautiful things. But as most of these works are owned by the company, the sale will not alleviate Mr Nadir's own financial problems.

Some of Mr Nadir's personal creditors are likely to press ahead with a

bankruptcy application this week. The Turkish Cypriot businessman has been unable to raise the cash to pay his trading debts in the one month's grace he was granted because he has been distracted by 18 charges of theft and false accounting, and the organisation of a record bid of £3.5 million.

The items on sale at PPT's sumptuous headquarters have had a minimum value of £3 million ascribed to them by Phillips, and admission to the auction on February 19 at its Bond Street saleroom will be by catalogue only.

Among the lots are two watercolours by Turner, two Flemish tapestries, several carpets from the Middle East, a very fine seascape by Ivazovsky, the 19th century Russian painter, a pair of 'Empire' torchères and some Hepplewhite

furniture. The administration appears to have moved into a new phase. At least eight of the main board members, including Mr Nadir, are expected to hand in their resignations shortly and the mystery over £200 million purportedly on deposit in northern Cyprus is being unravelled.

Dr Kanan Atakol, the foreign minister of the unofficial republic of northern Cyprus, was in London last week on a private visit. He was also reported to be seeking the advice of the authorities on the fate of PPT's large portfolio of assets on the island. The northern Cypriot government has been very supportive of Mr Nadir and only recently gave the administrators access to information on the hotel, fruit and packaging assets located on the island.

The facts on foreign currency mortgages.

Or how to get from "ERM" to "AHA!"

Foreign currency mortgages have attracted more than a little attention since ERM entry.

But the debate has generated as much heat as light. Are the potential savings worth the risks? Should you think of them as a way to lower your repayments, or to cut your borrowings? Most important of all, who should - and who shouldn't - consider them?

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Low-key sale for power generators

By MARTIN WALLER

IT LOOKS like a mere warp factor one for National Power and the smaller PowerGen, the two electricity generators, when the first *Star Trek*-style advertisement reaches the nation's television screens this Thursday.

The campaign will cost just a third of the estimated £20 million spent on selling the 12 electricity distribution companies last year, after the overwhelming response to this left minimal allocations for the 5.7 million private investors who applied for the shares.

The government and its advisers have decided to avoid another media blitzkrieg when they sell the generators. The campaign, of a distinctly popular nature and also featuring the TV character *Wonderwoman*, will last just eight weeks, against the earlier three-month campaign. Each day only a third as many advertisements will be shown.

The press and other forms of media have yet to be booked but a similar reduction is expected. The soft-

peddling of the campaign for the generators is at least partly an attempt to rein in public expectations and ensure a less embarrassing response from the retail investor.

Government advisers say much of the work in selling the generators has already been done for them. The publicity for the distributors led to 7.3 million early registrations for the shares, and that list will be used to market the generators. But there is also a belief that National Power and PowerGen are a less attractive proposition for the small private investor than the distributors, lacking an already established customer base who could be offered incentives to buy into their local firm.

Advisers have ruled out incentives in the form of money off electricity bills, and any perks are likely to be in the form of free shares as a loyalty bonus for the long-term investor.

The generators, therefore, will be aimed at the more sophisticated investor and the City institutions.

VAT clerical error puts firm into receivership

A COMPANY that had an official receiver appointed by mistake by VAT officials was yesterday waiting for an apology.

Ulverston Precision Machining in Ulverston, Cumbria, was taken to the high court for not paying its £2,000 VAT bill. A petition by the Customs and Excise said the company was insolvent and applied to have it wound up.

But it was all a mistake caused by a clerical error.

The damage had been done, however, and workers heard their jobs had gone. Mrs Susan McAlinden, who runs the company with her husband, said: "People were ringing us up to say they had heard we had gone bust."

The VAT solicitor said: "It was a genuine error - we are very sorry."

Barclays looks at Italian link

By NEIL BENNETT
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BARCLAYS Bank is considering a link with Assicurazioni Generali, Italy's leading insurance group, as part of its expansion into continental Europe.

Humphrey Norrington, head of overseas operations at Barclays, said the bank would look at ways of co-operating with Generali this year. The companies have been drawn together by Barclays' acquisition of Europenne de Banque, the French retail bank. Europenne sells Generali products through its LaFayette Investment, its insurance subsidiary. The chairman of Merck Finck, Barclays' new German subsidiary, is also on Generali's board.

Barclays has also negotiated a discount of almost £50 million on its acquisition of Europenne. It is paying Fr1.5 billion (£151 million) for the bank, against its original offer of £200 million. Barclays also hopes to offset a third of the price by selling its existing Paris office.

The British bank has completed the acquisition of a 51 per cent stake in Europenne and will buy the remaining shares early this year. Europenne will be merged with Barclays French operations, and Barclays hopes to cut 250 jobs from the combined bank's head office staff, a tenth of the workforce.

Mr Norrington has been negotiating the acquisition for a year with Europenne and Credit Commercial de France, its parent, and was first turned down in favour of National Westminster Bank. Europenne's directors were originally worried they would be swamped by Barclays' existing French management.

NatWest pulled out of the negotiations last autumn, leaving Barclays to renew its offer at the lower price. Europenne caters for wealthy personal customers, and has 16 branches, mainly around Paris. Barclays is paying three times Europenne's net assets of Fr497 million despite the discount.

STANLEY Kalma, the chairman of Dixons Group, is expected to announce a fall in interim profits when he reports on Wednesday. However, all eyes will be focused on the high street electrical retailer's performance in the all-important Christmas trading period.

Some analysts fear that Christmas trading was below expectations. However, Nick Bubb at Morgan Stanley, who has Dixons pencilled in as his 'stock for the year', said: "UK retail profits won't be as bad as people expect because sales won't be as bad as people expected and the cost base has been reduced."

Mr Bubb is looking for pre-tax profits of £22 million for the first half, compared with £32 million last time, excluding a £5 million unwinding surplus.

However, this is at the higher end of market expectations, which have a wide spread, ranging from £11 million to £29 million.

The company is expected to see a £4 million swing in interest, from negative last time to about a £1.3 million contribution this time.

Mr Bubb also expects a respectable, albeit reduced, contribution from property trading, benefiting from a strong performance on the continent, notably Belgium.

TODAY

Carole Engineering, the card clothing, wire and engineering group, is expected to report interim pre-tax profits of £4.9 million, against £4 million, according to UBS Phillips & Drew. This is at the higher end of expectations, which start at just over £4 million.

The group should benefit from improved interest receipts after the disposal of its Woodhead springs subsidiary.

Interim: Carole Engineering Group, Havaro Eurobond & Money Market Fund.

Finals: Barr (AG), Economic statistics: Credit business (November), retail sales (November - final), London and Scottish banks - quarterly analysis of lending (September/November), London sterling certificates of deposit (November), monetary statistics.

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FINRA 1

Rank Xerox out to win the East

TONY WHITE

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT
FINANCIAL EDITOR

Trucking out: John Pemberton, Rank Xerox director, shows off the travelling roadshow

Nervous HK business seeks strategy to cope with 1997

FROM LULU YU IN HONG KONG

ONE of the jokes going round Hong Kong is: "Why do investors buy Cathay Pacific shares?" Answer: "Because the airline's assets are rarely in Hong Kong."

The anecdote underlines nervousness in the business community about the 1997 return to China, especially since Jardine Matheson, one of the colony's largest companies, announced it was moving its base to Bermuda.

The latest company to act is the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, which last month said it would be setting up a parent company in Bermuda.

Most of Hong Kong's 290 quoted companies are likely to move abroad before 1997.

Moving, however, is not the

only way out. Cathay Pacific, owned by Swire Pacific, has gone into partnership with the Chinese. In 1987, it sold a 12.5 per cent stake to China International Trust and Investment Corp (Citic), Peking's overseas investment arm. Last January, Cathay broadened the alliance by taking 30 per cent for itself and 5 per cent for Swire, its parent, in Dragonair, Hong Kong's second airline. Citic is the carrier's largest shareholder.

Last year 30 per cent of Hongkong Telecom, a Cable and Wireless subsidiary, was sold to Citic for HK\$10 billion (£668 million).

The company wants to retain franchises in domestic phones and international services after they expire in 1995

and 2006. Li Ka-shing, Hong Kong's richest businessman, is in an equal three-way partnership with Citic and C&W in AsiaSat, Asia's first privately launched satellite.

Mr Li has also courted the Chinese by inviting them to take shares in his container operations, which come under Hutchison Whampoa, his flagship company. He is also expanding overseas.

Jardine Matheson, controlled from London by the Keswick family, is looking beyond its overseas base and operations.

The group is considering delisting from the Hong Kong exchange unless it can be granted an "exempt listing" that subjects it to primary securities rules in London rather than Hong Kong.

REPORTING THIS WEEK

Anxious City hopes to find out how merry was Dixons' Christmas



Kalma: decline expected

TOMORROW

Interim: Buxton Austin, East Midlands Electricity, Goode Durrant, Jure Hotel Group, Reliance Security.

Finals: M&W, Trealt.

Economic statistics: Personal income, expenditure and savings (third quarter), industrial and commercial companies' statistics (third quarter).

WEDNESDAY

Asda Group, the supermarket company headed by John Hardman, will see a fall in first-half pre-tax profits. The main culprit for the decline will be the interest costs of financing the 60 Gateway stores, acquired in October, 1989.

The group has borrowings of about £900 million, with the net interest charge estimated at £46 million for the half year, against receipts of £4.5 million last time.

Tony McNeary at County NatWest WoodMac expects interim pre-tax profits to fall 30 per cent to £58 million. Virtually all profits come from the food activities, which are expected to be fairly static,



Hardman: interest costs

with the chance of a slight decline in market share.

Continued high interest rates will not help MFI, which is expected to see interim losses extend from £2.8 million to £4 million, while Allied Carpets is expected to slide into the red with losses in the region of £3.8 million.

Bespak, the manufacturer of specialist aerosol valves, should benefit from strong revenue growth arising from buoyant demand for pharmaceutical valves, especially those supplied to Glaxo which account for more than two-thirds of the group's sales.

The company should also see a small contribution from last July's Klean-eze acquisition, although the main benefits will come through in the second half.

Interim pre-tax profits are expected to climb from £1.88 million to £2.33 million, according to BZW.

County NatWest WoodMac expects Southern Business Group, the office equipment leasing company, to achieve



Goodison: had debts up

final pre-tax profits of £14.6 million, against £10.3 million last time.

Interim: Asda Group, Banks (Edinburgh), Bespak, Dixons Group, Northern Electric, Southern Electric, South Wales Electricity.

Finals: Alexander Holdings, M&G Dual Trust, Southern Business Group.

Economic statistics: Christmas travel and tourism (October), advance energy statistics.

THURSDAY

Julian Robins at BZW believes that Sir Nicholas Goodison, the chairman of TSB Group, will report final pre-tax profits of between £325 million and £340 million, against last time's provision-laden £155 million.

Further news is awaited on the cost benefits from TSB's job cuts, which began in 1989.

Bad debts are expected to rise from £71 million in the first half to about £110 million in the second. However, Mr Robins fears that bad debts started to avalanche in May/June, so this second-half figure could be optimistic.

The bank lacks the big corporate worries of its

competitors, with a relatively low exposure to the corporate market as TSB's loan book remains a cross between the traditional clearers and a building society. About 40 per cent of advances are in the form of mortgages.

Savills, the chartered surveyor and estate agent, will not be able to match last year's interim pre-tax profits of £2.94 million in the continuing difficult market conditions, with most analysts expecting a figure near break-even as sales continue to be slow in all areas.

Although most of its business is in the commercial sector, the downturn in the residential housing market will have a substantial impact. Savills is finding it costly to maintain its prestige agency image and, despite regular exposure in publications like *Country Life*, the short-term outlook for the property sector remains bleak.

Interim pre-tax profits at Pope Group, the jeans and leisure wear supplier, are expected to decline from £6.6 million to between £2 million and £3 million.

Profits will be affected by borrowings, which are thought to have risen as the group has expanded its overseas operations.

Interim: Abbey, Beaverco, Eastern Electricity, Marlow, Midlands Electricity, OLM Convertible Trust, Pope Group, Savills, Seaboard, SelectTV.

Finals: Dewhurst, PWS Holdings, Torax Hire, TSB Group.

Economic statistics: Housing starts and completions (November).

PHILIP PANGALOS

CAPITAL MARKETS

Domino effect makes for 1990 blues

LAST year was not a year those operating in the international capital markets are likely to forget in a hurry. The threat and, later, the reality of worldwide recession was compounded by the after-effects of the invasion of Kuwait, the sharp rise in the oil price and the collapse of the Nikkei share index in Tokyo.

Figures released last week by *EuroMoney* illustrate just what a dire 12 months it was for most participants in the industry. The public Eurobond market, for example, saw a 17 per cent decline in new issues from \$212.4 billion in 1989 to \$175.4 billion last year.

The contraction was most marked in the dollar sector, with the proportion of Eurobonds issued in the

American currency falling from 56 per cent to 39.5 per cent. The fastest growing sectors were the yen (6 per cent to 12 per cent) and the ecu (5 per cent to 10 per cent). Sterling lost its position as the third largest currency in the Eurobond market to the yen, although it increased its share from 9 per cent to 11.8 per cent.

The fall in the Nikkei, and the resulting decline in Japanese warrant issue activity, meant that the Japanese stranglehold on the top positions in the Eurobond bookrunners' league table was finally broken. Nevertheless, Nomura retained its number one status with \$16.1 billion of deals. But in second and third positions were two European houses, Credit Suisse First Boston and Deutsche Bank. The

top placed UK house was, once again, SG Warburg in 15th position.

The international credit markets fared even worse than the bond markets last year, with a 20.5 per cent fall in the total value of new deals from \$330.4 billion to \$261.3 billion. The second half of the year was worst affected, with Japanese lenders effectively withdrawing after the 40 per cent collapse of the Nikkei index.

As usual, the US banks dominated the table with Citicorp retaining its top position by arranging 136 deals worth \$31.7 billion. The UK banks, which arranged most of the funding for the various privatised or soon-to-be privatised electricity concerns, held or improved their positions. Barclays was the highest ranked UK

bank. It arranged 104 loans worth \$17.1 billion for its sixth position.

Apart from higher pricing, one of the main features of the year was the reduction in the average maturity of new loans. More than half the international credits raised last year had maturities of less than five years compared with 46 per cent in 1989.

Borrowers came from a wider variety of countries than in 1989 and Eastern European borrowers increased their share from 0.8 per cent to 2.7 per cent. One loan, a DM2 billion credit for the Soviet Union, was responsible for lifting its average, Bayerische Landesbank from 93rd to 17th in the table.

JONATHAN PRYNN

GILT-EDGED

Little hope of early relief for long yields

THE margin of error for UK financial market forecasts appears far greater than normal. The international uncertainties produced by the tensions in the Gulf, the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the strains within the Japanese and American banking systems combine to cloud any central assumptions forecasters need to make.

Although this is clearly not unique to Britain, it has special significance here. For one of the lessons of the 1972-74 and the 1980-81 downturns was the degree to which a weakening world economy swamped the initial recovery in domestic spending and hence extended the period of below trend growth. It also produced eventually two of the greatest years for UK gilt returns: 1977 and 1982. This year, however, may not be of a similar vintage.

International factors again threaten to overwhelm the domestic business cycle but their effects may be far from beneficial. A war in the Gulf will not be good news for bonds. Quite apart from the obvious uncertainties surrounding any conflict, rising budget deficits and oil supply disruptions will raise inflationary expectations.

Even a successful resolution to the Gulf tensions need not leave the world a safe place. Attention then could simply switch to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which arguably are providing the greatest shock to the world economy.

The financing of the transition from a communist state to something resembling a free market may rely heavily on industrial nations' coffers through the Nineties, particularly those of Western Europe which only a year ago was deemed to be the greatest beneficiary of these developments. Western Europe faces higher budget deficits or higher inflation and probably both. The rise in long-term bond yields in Germany has provided a salutary warning of how quickly standards of value in bond markets can change.

There is one positive development in the need to improve bank profitability. This is best achieved by returning to a positive yield curve. This condition is beginning to appear with the Anglo bloc of countries, notably America and Australia. Britain has been slow to follow. The constraint here is deemed to be our membership of the ERM. It was inevitable that whatever exchange rate was chosen

sen for our point of entry, it would be criticised as too high. There is more convincing evidence that the pain in the corporate sector is coming now from a domestic monetary policy that is too tight than from a mark-exchange rate that is too high.

Interest rates are biting and they are leading to a deterioration in financial confidence that will have repercussions for the recovery. Bankers and investors, having rediscovered credit risk, can do precious little about it now, but the lessons will influence the design of their portfolio preferences come the upturn. In the next recovery the cost of capital will be an important determinant of competitiveness and at current domestic interest rates British companies stand little chance of competing effectively.

The policy misjudgement was entered the ERM with the largest corporate sector deficit ever recorded and at a time when the long term cost of capital in Germany was rising.

The pressures this has placed on companies attempting to rebuild their cash flows is immense. Their failure to do so is reflected in the bankruptcy figures and the expected reduction in company spending.

There is a real danger that this monetary squeeze is being underestimated and that its impact on investment spending will be far greater than current forecasts expect.

The result may be good news for sterling, for inflation short term and hence for short-term interest rates, but external factors still seem likely to constrain progress on long-term rates coming down below 10 per cent. This is still some way off but it is a barrier that will not be easily broken.

Consequently, corporate debt yields may remain unusually high for this stage of the cycle. Indeed, given the current credit crunch, corporate borrowers may not be as price sensitive as they have been.

This year should bring a considerably higher level of debt issuance. Not only should the government sector return to deficit but the corporate sector will remain in sizeable deficit. Moreover, ecu issuance should rise in the public and private sectors. This increased supply will be an additional constraint on long yields.

MICHAEL HUGHES
BZW Strategy

Sales of companies fall to 15-year low

By MARTIN BARROW

THE market for privately owned companies is the weakest for at least 15 years, according to Ernst and Young Corporate Finance.

High interest rates and the uncertain outlook for business have increased the number of forced sellers while deterring potential buyers from making offers for their companies.

Richard Mead, national director of Ernst and Young, said: "For the first time in perhaps 15 years we have experienced a genuine buyers' market for private companies and subsidiaries. For many sellers it is no longer a question of price but whether a buyer can be persuaded to transact at all."

Last year Ernst and Young completed 41 transactions with an aggregate value of £243 million.

Buyers from overseas are playing a significant role in sustaining even the reduced

levels of activity in mergers and acquisitions in the quoted sector and are often paying higher prices than their British counterparts, said Mr Mead.

But he feared these companies would retreat from the market if the recession in Britain showed further signs of deepening.

Another feature of the weak market is that deals are taking longer to complete and buyers are more likely to withdraw at an advance stage.

However, Ernst and Young report continued activity in the management buyout market, particularly at the lower end.

The absence of competing offers by corporate buyers and the relatively low prices now being sought by sellers are encouraging bids by existing management teams, who are better placed to assess the risk involved.

Job cuts at financial firms predicted

A SENIOR economist at Lloyds Bank has given warning that the fast growth of the financial services industry has ended and that many financial companies will shed jobs during the recession.

Christopher Johnson, Lloyds' chief economic adviser, says in the bank's monthly *Economic Bulletin* that growth in the sector will slow to little more than that of the economy as a whole for the next five years.

Employment in financial services between 1979 and 1990 grew by more than 5 per cent a year to 2.81 million. But Mr Johnson says there may be no net growth in employment in the next five years.

Soft option in the hard ecu debate

ECONOMIC VIEW

COLIN NARBROUGH

Among the inheritances Norman Lamont came into when taking over as Chancellor was a fully-worked, much-aided proposal by our present prime minister for a hard ecu alternative route to European economic and monetary union. This rival to the Delors plan was welcomed for bringing Britain back to the table on EMU, though few see it as much more than a diversion. For all the brainpower expended on John Major's hard ecu scheme, Britain's isolation continues. Despite the improved atmosphere at last month's European Community summit in Rome, Mr Major was a lone voice in favour of his ecu.

Undeterred, he gave Mr Lamont the task of putting the proposal for the new common currency, and the European Monetary Fund to control it, into the formal language of draft amendments to the Treaty of Rome. In preparation for the inter-governmental conference round that starts next week, the Treasury this week lifts the veil on the texts, hoping to demonstrate how earnest the gov-

ernment is about the hard ecu. No Whitehall wheeze this. The substance, Mr Major indicated on television yesterday, will be unchanged.

Why is the Treasury going to all this trouble when at the end of the day the hard ecu it envisages appears to have scant hope of winning support in other EC capitals? The dogged pursuit of lost causes is a highly inappropriate activity for a government committed to value for money. As Mrs Thatcher's Chancellor, Mr Major was keen to underline the pragmatic, practical, evolutionary nature of his hard ecu, which he sees filling a real gap in the second stage of EMU. Ideologically sound, he believes markets and consumers should decide whether they use the new unit. No imposition from above. That, of course, leaves the way open for peoples and parliaments to decide in the distant future whether they want the hard ecu, which never

devalues against its constituents, as a single currency.

While the theoretical debate about the hard ecu continues, the existing ecu quietly gains acceptance. Even the British government is preparing to issue its first ecu-denominated bond to improve management of its foreign exchange reserves. But this is small beer. The European Commission wants to push ahead this year with plans to extend the use of the ecu in its budget programmes, including commission salaries. The goal is to use the unit in support payments to farmers and on aid to infrastructure schemes.

A recent study by the Ecu Banking Association concluded that, as a parallel currency in

Europe, the ecu has been restricted by lack of interest by market participants and businessmen, not by legal obstacles or the way in which the unit is defined. But the commercial world's experience of the present ecu, which has existed for a decade as a basket currency made up of the 12 EC currencies weighted according to the size of each economy, suggests that acceptance of a parallel currency, especially an additional hard ecu, will be difficult to secure without more political encouragement.

The financial practitioners of the EBA have made clear that Britain's call for a completely redefined ecu is a non-starter unless accompanied by a full commitment to making the ecu

Europe's future single currency. Why not develop the existing ecu into the single currency, they argue. It could be gradually hardened by freezing the present weightings to ensure greater weight from the hard component currencies.

The study found that the ecu has achieved the same status as other foreign currencies in most EC states, despite its evident handicaps. Many countries allow its use for invoicing and payments, listing stocks and accounting. In Denmark and the Netherlands, it can be used to meet tax demands.

No legal obligations exist in Britain, Spain or the Netherlands for retailers to denominate prices in national currencies. Dual pricing in domestic currencies and the ecu would be easily achieved. Invoicing in ecus is allowed in several countries, but not widely practised because of requirements to state VAT in local currencies. Paying in

foreign currencies, including ecus, is only an obligation when specifically agreed. Most European stock exchanges impose no restrictions on listing securities denominated in foreign currencies, several governments have already issued ecu bonds, and no legal barriers exist to a double quotation system.

While the official ecu has been given a formal role as the European Monetary System's unit of account, and forms the basis of the divergence indicator in the exchange-rate mechanism, the private ecu has largely been left outside the scope of national or EC law. Use of the private ecu depends on the principle of freedom between contracting parties. A true market ecu! Importantly, *angst* about the ecu leading to imported inflation, has made Germany legally define the ecu as a currency index. In most other EC countries the ecu is recognised as a *de facto* foreign currency. And as long ago as 1987, Belgium issued ecu coins as legal tender. Our government would do well to consider that pragmatic, evolutionary thinking is not unique to Britain.

NUCLEAR Electric, the state-run atomic energy company for England and Wales, is on course to achieve a substantial improvement in profitability over the next half decade.

Prolonging the life of first-generation Magnox plants, improving performance from the later advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGRs) and cutting staff should brighten prospects for the nuclear industry in Britain. The nuclear generators are also hoping for government concessions that will enable them to cut decommissioning and spent fuel disposal costs.

However, the high capital costs of nuclear power may prevent it competing commercially with coal and gas stations for at least a decade. The nuclear industry is acutely aware that it has just three years in which to improve its viability and recover public confidence. Its high costs and open-ended liabilities forced the government to abandon plans to sell it during the first half of this year.

In the year to end-March 1990, Nuclear Electric declared a historic-cost, after-tax loss of £928 million, and a deficiency of shareholders' funds of £3.6 billion.

The government is to hold a review of nuclear power in 1994. If work on new plants is not started soon after, the nuclear contribution to British generating capacity will decline from about 20 per cent to little more than 10 per cent by 2005.

In March last year ministers vested Nuclear Electric as a company and strengthened its management, with a view to introducing a more commercial approach. The Scottish nuclear stations were vested in a separate company, Scottish Nuclear, under the control of the Scottish Office.

Sir John Collier, chairman of Nuclear Electric, is to cut the workforce by 2,500, to 11,500, by 1993. He has also set out to make Nuclear Electric's power stations more efficient.

The first signs of improvement are expected to show through better productivity from the company's five AGR stations. During the year to March 1990, the stations, which account for half of Nuclear Electric's output, produced power at an average price of 5.9p a unit. That compares with about 3.5p a unit for a modern coal station with emissions cleaning

Time runs short to polish the nuclear act



Productivity drives Sir John Collier of Nuclear Electric

equipment, and 2.5p for a plant fired by natural gas.

Like so much of Britain's civil nuclear programme, Nuclear Electric's AGR stations have hitherto been a commercial disaster. Each of the stations is of a different design. Each was intended to be refuelled while generating at 30 per cent of capacity. Only Heysham 1, in Lancashire, achieves that.

Reducing reactor downtime is critical to improving operating economics. Because fuel in the AGRs is renewed progressively, AGR operation is interrupted every 12 to 20 weeks for refuelling. The process can take up to three weeks. On top of that, each of the 24 reactors (two per station) has to be shut down

every other year for extended maintenance. Overall, Nuclear Electric's five AGR and seven Magnox stations averaged a load factor of only 60.9 per cent last year.

The biggest impact on the bottom line, though, will come from extending the operating lives of the Magnox stations, built to last 25 to 30 years. Nuclear Electric is confident it can win approval from the nuclear installations inspectorate to keep seven of its nine plants running for an extra decade or so.

Since the capital cost of the Magnox plants is deemed to have been repaid, Nuclear Electric says their power will cost just 1.5p to 2p a unit.

The only nuclear power station under construction in

Britain is a pressurised water reactor (PWR) being built at Sizewell, Suffolk, by Nuclear Electric. It is set to begin generating with a capacity of 1,372 megawatts in late 1994.

Despite cost escalation from £1.69 billion to £2.03 billion, in 1987 prices, the government and Nuclear Electric are committed to completing Sizewell B. Friends of the Earth says the real cost could reach £3.8 billion.

Nuclear Electric says that power from Sizewell B will cost between 4.8p and 5.7p a unit.

Scottish Nuclear, which runs two AGR stations, has consistently achieved far higher load factors, and hence produced much cheaper electricity, than its rival south of the border.

Scottish Nuclear provides half of Scotland's power under contract to the nation's two supply companies. The unit price of power at the plug socket in Scotland is the lowest in Britain, but the availability of cheap hydro power and debt write-offs disguise the true cost of nuclear power in Scotland.

Both Scottish Nuclear and Nuclear Electric are now focusing on cheaper ways of decommissioning old stations and disposing of spent fuel. They argue that reprocessing is not necessarily the best way to dispose of spent fuel, and that it would be much cheaper to entomb old plants than dismantle them. Nuclear Electric will also argue that the cost of dealing with spent fuel from PWR reactors is a tenth of that occasioned by Magnox stations.

The privatisation programme has been a revealing process, but it is by no means complete. The modest rate of return on capital required by the government from power projects in the past has resulted in the development of generating capacity that, on pure economic grounds, makes little sense.

Concern over greenhouse gas emissions, especially of carbon dioxide, could prove the nuclear industry's saviour. But the price is high. In the current year, nuclear plants in England and Wales are likely to receive a subsidy of more than £1.7 billion. Unless costs come down, the customer may balk at any nuclear renewal programme.

ROSS TIEMAN
Industrial Correspondent

New sector open for business

TENDRIS

AS AN alternative to the January sales, consider business services — the stock market's new sector born on New Year's day that consists of 14 companies providing industrial and commercial services to business customers.

The constituent parts have long been out of favour, but the new sector offers investment opportunities and there are rewards for those prepared to take the contrary view.

The sector, analysed recently by Paul Beaufort of James Capel, the broker, arrives with a pedigree that hardly shines. On the basis of a theoretical share index, the business services sector has underperformed the FTA All-Share index by 12 per cent over the past five years.

On Capel's estimates, the sector is poised to report aggregate earnings growth of 4.1 per cent for 1990 and earnings growth of 6.3 per cent in 1991.

That compares with Capel forecasts of a 4 per cent decline in 1990 earnings and a 7 per cent growth in 1991 in respect of the full FTA Industrials index constituents.

On the dividend front, busi-

ness services are offering estimated growth of 7.5 per cent and 8.8 per cent in the 1990 and 1991 years, compared with 8.9 per cent and 7.7 per cent respectively, on the FTA All-Share index.

Oxford Economic Forecasting has estimated the 1990 business support services market at £42.5 billion, equivalent to 5 per cent of gross economic output, and at \$800 billion in America, or 8 per cent of gross economic output.

'Oxford Economic Forecasting predicts business services growth in the Nineties of 11.5 per cent per annum in Britain'

On the assumption that services feed on services, Oxford predicts growth during the Nineties of 11.5 per cent per annum in Britain, and 9.3 per cent per annum in America.

The 14 shares in the sector — Automated Security Holdings, BET, Haworth Leslie, Hogg Robinson, Inchcape, Johnson Group Cleaners, LEP Group, Manpower, Alexander Proudfoot, Reed Executive,

Rentokil, Robertson Group, Securicor and Sketchley — have a market capitalisation of £4.5 billion.

The sector competes in size with contracting and construction, general engineering, printing and publishing, shipping and transport, water or the life insurance sectors.

None of the 14 will dominate the business services sector, though BET, Inchcape and Rentokil all have market capitalisations in the £1 bil-

lions of the companies reviewed by Capel range from 6.9 per cent at Inchcape to 25.1 per cent at ADT, with double-digit ratios the rule.

Returns on capital range from 25.5 per cent at Securicor to 56.8 per cent at Rentokil.

Capital gearing by contrast is relatively low, with the exception of BET. ADT, Rentokil and Securicor could all boast net cash at the last balance sheet dates.

Alexander Proudfoot has a strong balance sheet, is recession-resistant and, at 291p on 5.8 times prospective 1991 earnings, is lowly rated. Inchcape, at 231p on a 1991 p/e of 8.3, and ADT, at 107p on a 6.3 rating, have merit. So does Sketchley at 80p, on the grounds that there is new management and there could be a recovery.

The 10.8 per cent yield support for BET suggests a hold, despite gearing levels, but Automated Security and Manpower look well priced.

Reed and Robertson are unlikely to buck poor market sentiment in the short term, while Hogg Robinson and Johnson Group Cleaners must rank well down on any buying list.

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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Whitehead's renaissance

IAN Whitehead, the City financier who has dabbled in everything from science to advising Margaret Thatcher, has taken another challenge. As newly appointed chief financial officer of Berkeley Govett, the international fund management and financial services group, he is leading a drive to expand in Europe and America. "We are looking to develop a fund management business in the United States and strengthen European ties," says Whitehead, aged 35, who read physics and chemistry at University College, London, before unexpectedly joining Price Waterhouse in 1976. "I was lined up for a PhD at the time, but a distant relation in the financial world persuaded me to think again." After a three-year spell in New York, he returned to London with Bank of Montreal and in 1988 was seconded to the Downing Street policy unit. He had weekly meetings with the former prime minister, helping advise on the reform of the National Health Service. "I was astonished by her

memory. You always had to be careful what you said, since she would remember the words even after six months." Whitehead joined Berkeley Govett last May, and now works closely with Arthur Trueger, the chairman.

Suit-case sought

SAM George, the colourful founder and chairman of Chelsea Man, the Unlisted Securities Market clothing chain, is determined to do his bit for charity. Quite unfazed by talk in this column that his part-exchange clothing sale

was not having the desired impact, he has launched a fresh appeal to charities to take him up on his generous offer. George is running a New Year sale at his Nickleby's, Copyright and Company stores, offering discounts in exchange for suits and other items of clothing which he hopes will be used to help the homeless. But despite a growing pile of part-exchange suits — 2,500 had been received by the weekend — beneficiaries have been slow to respond. "Will some charity please come forward and collect them," says George, who hopes to gather as many as 10,000 suits and other items before the sale ends. He also denies beheading Michael Heseltine at a USM dinner.

PATRONS of a restaurant in Durban, South Africa, are getting the message since the owner put this sign over the exit: "Knives, forks and spoons aren't like medicine — to be taken after meals."

Budapest

AFTER four years studying Japanese etiquette in his role as vice-chairman of Daiwa

Europe, Nick Clegg has taken on his most ambitious role yet. Clegg, who spent 15 years with Hill Samuel before joining Daiwa in 1986, has become a leading light in plans to form a new investment bank in Hungary, a country with which Daiwa has strong historical links. He has joined the board of Daiwa MKB, a joint venture between Daiwa, the National Bank of Hungary and the Hungarian foreign trade bank, which it is hoped will develop into a fully fledged investment bank once new legislation has been introduced. "I feel the very model of a modern European man," says Clegg, aged 54, who is working on the project with Minoru Mori, London-based chairman and chief executive of Daiwa Europe. Regulatory hurdles aside, the most pressing problem facing the new office in Budapest has been hiring staff. For to be suitable, applicants must have both financial skills and be fluent in Magyar, the Hungarian language — a combination which so far has proved impossible to find.

JON ASHWORTH

Portfolio

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2	Lox Scott Bt	Banking	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
3	Elly & Everard	Chemicals	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
4	Uhrman (as)	Oil/Gas	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
5	Wickson	Chemicals	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
6	Wadley	Industrial S-Z	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
7	Ashtley Group	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
8	Yeo (as)	Chemicals	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
9	Tesco (as)	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
10	Cap & Comies	Property	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
11	Br Borneo	Oil/Gas	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
12	Highland Dair	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
13	Peterson Ltd	Property	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
14	Grampian Hg	Industrial E-K	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
15	Oxford Instrum	Electronics	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
16	Dawson	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
17	Pittington (as)	Industrial L-R	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
18	Fisher (James)	Transport	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
19	FR Group	Motor/Aircraft	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
20	T & N (as)	Industrial S-Z	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
21	Brimming	Property	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
22	Capital Radio	Leisure	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
23	Colin Energy	Oil/Gas	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
24	Low (as)	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
25	Young (as)	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
26	CRT Co	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
27	Barclay Inst	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
28	Pendragon	Motor/Aircraft	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
29	Cornwall Furn	Drugs/Stores	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
30	Leeds	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
31	Morgan Ole	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
32	Tibbs & Briten	Transport	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
33	Tyne Tees TV	Leisure	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
34	Morris (John)	Drugs/Stores	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
35	BET (as)	Industrial A-D	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
36	Mang Bros	Industrial L-R	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
37	Diploma	Industrial A-D	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
38	Lifeshell	Industrial L-R	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
39	Sainsbury J (as)	Food	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
40	Warner Howard	Industrial S-Z	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
41	Tomkins	Industrial S-Z	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
42	Morland	Textiles	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
43	Town Centre	Property	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0
44	Gl Western Res	Oil/Gas	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £8,000 on Saturday's newspaper.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	TOTAL

There were no winners of Saturday's Portfolio Platinum prize of £4,000. The money will be added to next Saturday's weekly game.

BRITISH FUNDS

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

SHORTS (Under Five Years)

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

UNDATED

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

INDEX-LINKED

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

Stock	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

Capitalisation and change on week

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)
ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began December 31. Dealings end January 11. Settlement day January 14. Settlement day January 21.
Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices are Friday's middle prices. Change, dividend, yield and P/E ratios are calculated on middle prices. (as) denotes Alpha Stocks.

Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1000	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

Portfolio

PLATINUM

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DAILY DIVIDEND

£2,000

Claims required for +33 points

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

No.	Company	Group	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	Property	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

OVERSEAS TRADERS

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

PAPER, PRINT, ADVERTISING

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

PROPERTY

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

SHOES, LEATHER

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

TEXTILES

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

TOBACCO

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

TRANSPORT

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

WATER

No.	Company	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield	P/E
1	McLaren	10.00	+0.10	0.10	1.0%	10.0

© Ex dividend & Ex at discount dividend & interim payment passed & Price at suspension & dividend & yield exclude a special payment & Pre-merger figures & Forecast earnings & Ex other & Ex rights & Ex script & share split & Tax-free

No significant data

Trainees learning to teach by giving lessons as well as taking them are in demand. Andrew Marshall reports

Teachers who learn in school

Education ministers are considering changing the way in which teachers are trained following criticism of current methods in the debate about falling standards in schools. While Her Majesty's Inspectorate reports that one in three teachers are not up to scratch, more severe critics suggest that the £300 million spent annually on teacher training is squandered on burdening trainees with theoretical baggage that has little to do with classroom practice.

The internship scheme run by the Oxford University Department of Educational Studies (OUDES) attempts to throw the focus back on to the school, but without shedding the theoretical, university-based knowledge that its pioneers believe is crucial to turning out good classroom practitioners.

The 186 students spend their year as interns attached to one of 18 Oxfordshire schools, such as the Cherwell school, but are also taught by university staff. Experienced teachers chosen by the school act as mentors to supervise pairs of interns in their department.

The interns work as teachers from the start, led gently through a first term spent in classrooms and university seminars. They work in the school full-time in the second term, returning in the third term to mixed-classroom and seminar sessions.

A conventional Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course sandwiches a period of classroom practice between two often hard-to-digest chunks of educational theory.

The internship scheme strives to solve the problem of relating theory and practice by first recognising that experienced teachers are highly qualified professionals with complex craft skills they can pass on.

From the start in 1987, the scheme stressed the partnership between teachers and teacher trainers, relying on many years of good relations between the schools

and the university. The abiding notion that the expertise of teacher trainers is superior to that of the scheme recognised that both university and school have different but complementary types of knowledge to offer.

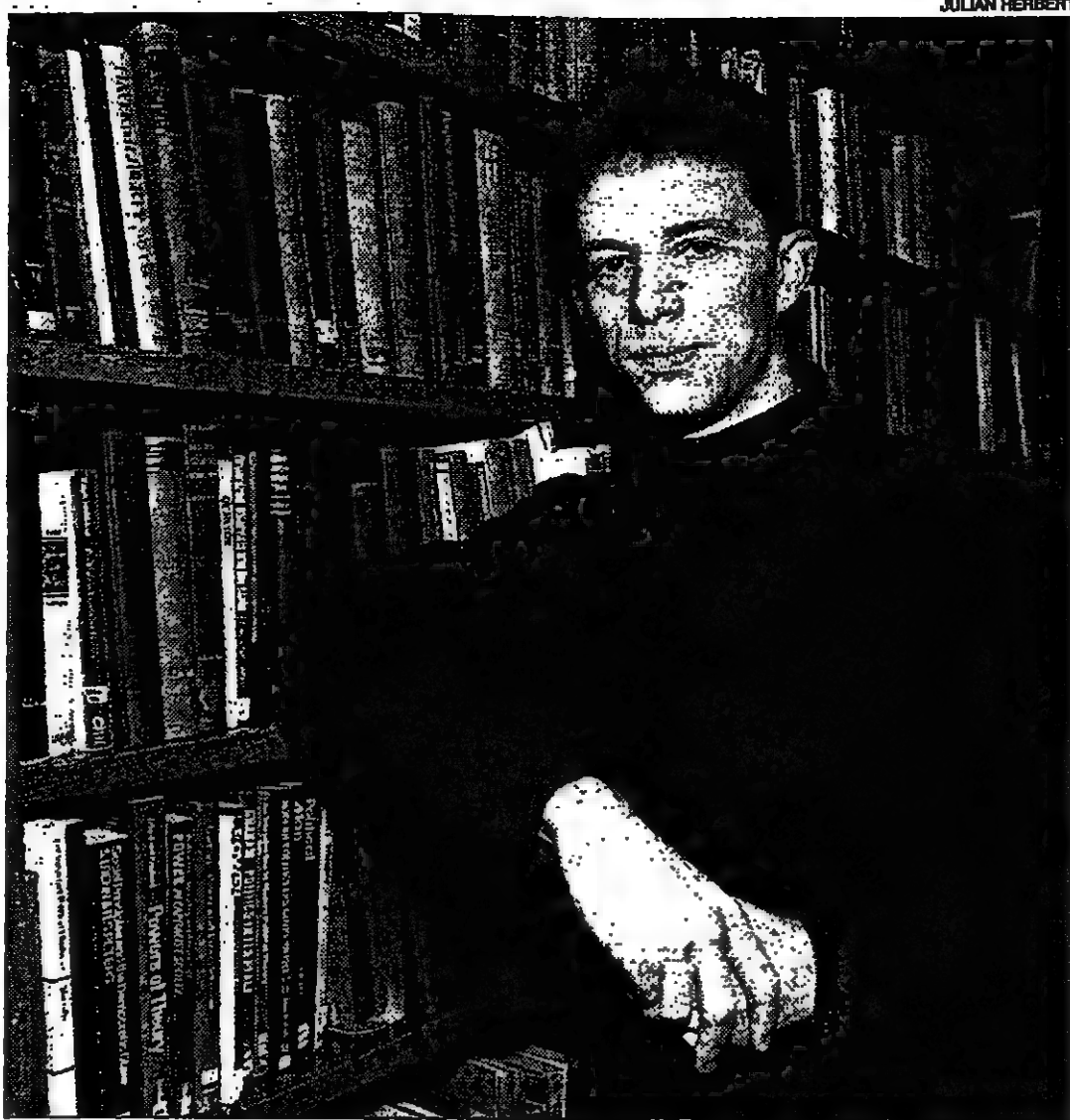
The fact that schools were partners rather than subordinates in the development of the scheme is one reason why mentors are willing to take on their extra role at the same time as coping with the demands of implementing the national curriculum.

"Having some control over the creation of the profession is very important to teachers," says Anna Pendry, who chaired the group of 12 Oxfordshire teachers who helped develop the scheme with the university, and is now a history tutor in the department. "More than half of our history mentors want to be involved in interviewing new candidates, even though this means racing into the department in their spare time after school hours."

The intern's relationship with the mentor is also a partnership and not, as in conventional PGCE courses, an apprenticeship. Interns spend most of their year in school and come to be accepted as members of staff whose input is welcome. The intern has to draw out lessons from the mentor, whose classroom skills may, over years of teaching, have become so much second nature that a teacher finds them difficult to pass on.

"Internship is very much a two-way process," says Mark Bonnell, a 22-year-old who teaches French and German at Larkmead school near Oxford. "It helps teachers assess their performance when someone is looking at it critically."

Mr Bonnell believes the scheme has struck the right balance. "This term was not one of dry lectures," he says, "but it was a good mixture of theory and hands-on teaching so you could see whether the theory worked in the classroom. It does not, however, tell you any right or wrong — you find that out through your own experience."



Balance: Mark Bonnell, who teaches French and German, believes internship benefits trainee and teacher

Interns such as Mr Bonnell are keenly sought by local schools. More than 60 per cent of Oxfordshire's probationary secondary teachers came through the university's education department — a fair return on the school's investment of a mentor's time and energy.

Local headmasters say interns stand out at interviews for their in-depth knowledge of how a school works. They also show unusual maturity in their first year of teaching.

Clare Hake, who spent two years as a mentor at Icknield school before joining Oxford as a history tutor, believes internship gives good teachers a status which has been lacking.

Ms Hake says: "It can be difficult to gain recognition in schools as a good classroom teacher. Your brightest and best increasingly get promoted out of the classroom and into administrative roles."

Working as a mentor can give

teachers the pastoral, curricular and organisational skills useful for later promotion to head of department.

Miss Hake views the relationship between mentors and interns as "an injection of energy" into schools. It keeps teachers on their toes by inviting bright, enthusiastic graduates to ask difficult questions about what they are doing. "Usually teachers aren't asked to unpack their skills in this way," Miss Hake says. "This can give them enormous confidence."

The government response to teacher quality and shortage is two-pronged.

The school-based, articulated teacher scheme which started in September also adopts experienced serving teachers as mentors but pays graduates £11,000 over the two-year course. The licensed-teachers scheme is aimed at those aged over 26, with degrees in appropriate subjects, who are employed by schools on a licensed

basis. After two years, the graduates apply for qualified-teacher status without the need to complete a standard training course.

OUDES is extending the principles of internship into the two-year articulated-teachers scheme, but criticises the licensed-teachers scheme for what its staff see as the implicit suggestion that anyone can teach if equipped with in-depth knowledge of a certain subject. Some believe that mistakes by trainees put into a classroom with no practical teaching experience will damage the education of pupils.

The recognition that the Oxford method gives to teachers — as professionals equipped with complex craft skills — could conceivably help the arguments of those campaigning for better pay and conditions in teaching. The scheme also throws a bone to those who want to wrest teacher training from the hands of the educationists and put the emphasis back on the classroom.

Professional divide

PROTESTANT graduates from Northern Ireland get better jobs than Roman Catholics, immediately after leaving university and in the ensuing few years, according to a recent survey.

The University of Ulster Centre for Policy Research reports that Catholic graduates have lower average incomes, a higher unemployment rate and are more often in jobs for which third-level education is not required. There is, however, little evidence, the survey emphasises, that "anything so crude as active discrimination against the Catholic graduates is occurring".

The most likely cause is the choice of degrees. Catholics opt overwhelmingly for art and social sciences, Protestants for science and technology subjects, which lead to better-paying jobs. The survey also found that science-only A-level subjects were more likely to result in high grades than arts and social science combinations.

A team of academics followed the careers of higher education entrants in 1979 from A-level to the years immediately after university. They warn that the arts-science polarisation is causing professions to be dominated by co-religionists. Proportionately more Catholic professionals in Ulster are lawyers, while Protestant graduates are concentrated in the medical professions, primarily as junior doctors.

Coming of age

THE 450th anniversary celebrations of Wales's oldest public school will be launched with a service at Brecon cathedral later this month. Christ College, Brecon, Wales's largest independent boarding school, with fees of up to £5,380 a year, was founded by Henry VIII in 1541 "to teach the king's English to seven poor scholars".

An appeal has been launched to raise £300,000 for a new science block at the school, which has 362 pupils, including 36 sixth-form girls. Six Welsh bishops and the Archbishop of Wales, the Most Reverend George Noakes, will attend the cathedral service.

Young greens

YOUNG conservationists will be able to join School Friends, a new venture from Friends of the Earth. An annual fee of £25 will provide schools with information and project sheets, educa-

tional material and regular magazines.

Catholic directions

ROMAN Catholic schools and colleges are in need of educational guidance, Bishop David Konstant, of Leeds, said when he announced the appointment of the first director of the new Catholic Education Service. Albert Price, a former head of Putteridge high school and Community College, in Luton, Bedfordshire, and presently one of Her Majesty's school inspectors, will take up his appointment in April.

The new service replaces the Catholic Education Council.

Union resurgence

MEMBERSHIP of Scotland's main teaching union, the Educational Institute of Scotland, has risen to 45,573, a rise of 883 on last year and the highest it has been for seven years. A slight fall in membership was recorded during a pay dispute between 1984 and 1987. This year's total puts it slightly above the pre-dispute level.

Horses for courses

BRITAIN'S first degree course in equine studies opens at Coventry polytechnic in September and will be run in conjunction with the Warwickshire College of Agriculture.

The four-year course was introduced in response to the rapid expansion of the horse



industry in Britain. Students will spend the first two years at the agricultural college, but attend business studies at the polytechnic. The third year will be spent working in the industry, with students returning to college for their fourth year.

David Morris, the Peugeot head of the business school, will promote the course at the Dubai British education fair this week and plans are also in hand to offer scholarships to members of the Hong Kong Jockey Club.

DAVID TYTLER

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COURSES

FRENCH COURSES: 9-18 YEAR OLDS EASTER & SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Practise your French in an interesting and vital way in the beautiful surroundings of the Cotswolds. 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Figures of fun with the cricket ball, England show a hidden serious side with the bat

Gooch's field is reduced to stubble

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, SYDNEY

THERE is only one way left to go for a team that has hit rock bottom. England, incapable of exceeding the shambles they passed off as international cricket on Saturday, made what in other circumstances would have been a laudable progress towards redeeming themselves in the third Test match yesterday.

They batted through the day for a loss of only three wickets and Michael Atherton so painstakingly conquered the self-doubt which has been the ruin of his game on tour that he remained unbeaten on 94. If the ovation for such a plucky effort was short on passion, however, it reflected the fact that the Ashes were already conceded by as embarrassing a performance in the field as England have perpetrated for many years.

Micky Stewart, the team manager, went so far as to label Saturday as England's worst day of the series, which is a powerful denunciation when you consider what has gone before. But Graham Gooch, the captain, would go farther.

Beneath his wide-brimmed sun-hat and behind his mask of stubble, Gooch's face was still graphic in its horror as the day developed into an anthology of schoolboy errors and juvenile behaviour. It is doubtful if in all his 83 Tests, let alone his dozen as captain, he has ever felt so humiliated.

Gooch has always found losing hard enough to take

but, quite rightly, he finds surrendering intolerable. As England, through brainless bowling and stunningly poor fielding, presented Australia with the total they required to make the Ashes safe, he was unable or unwilling to conceal his anger.

Only Devon Malcolm, who laboured heroically through 45 overs for the relatively scant reward of four wickets, deserves exoneration and one can only imagine the mood of depression which dominated the dinner table where, later that evening, Gooch and the England chairman, Ted Dexter, discussed this shipwrecked tour.

Sunday morning found Sydney free at last from the stifling humidity of the past week but it was doubtful if the air had cleared in the England dressing-room, where the tensions and frustrations have publicly bubbled over, giving Gooch's previously undisputed command its most serious examination.

Shortly before play resumed, the public address music system resounded to "Send In The Clowns", which may have been somebody's idea of an appropriate joke. England, however, now set about demonstrating that even if their bowling and fielding made them legitimate figures of fun, some pride remained in the batting department.

On a pitch showing only slow and reluctant signs of

taking the expected amount of spin, Greg Matthews teased, twirled and jiggered through most of the day. He bowled in his cap, he bowled bareheaded; he bowled over and round the wicket; he bowled with variety and unquenchable optimism. But Australia's outlandish optimism failed to capture even one wicket.

Two catches were dropped off Matthews and he beat the bat periodically, one ball turning and bouncing so abruptly that it hit wicketkeeper Healy above the left eye, a wound which needed five stitches. Atherton, however, was immovable.

Gooch and Atherton gave England much their best start of the series with a first-wicket partnership of 95 in which the captain reached a still more impressive landmark. When 13, he became only the seventh Englishman to have scored 6,000 Test runs.

The bat was not beaten once in the opening hour, rare comfort for those who now regard England's collapse as part of everyday life. Gooch once more looked masterful and when he drove the final ball of the session through cover for four to reach 50 and turned purposefully for his lunch, there was a conviction about him which suggested it would be his last visit to the pavilion for some while.

But just when he had his feet under the table, the chair was pulled from under him. Reid dismissed him through the finest of leg-side edges to Healy and Gooch's record since his Test return in Melbourne now reads 20, 58, 37, 59, a frustrating sequence of innings which have all promised more than they produced.

Shortly before his end, Gooch narrowly survived being run out by Border from mid-wicket. It was the sort of decision which umpire Crafer might have judged differently with the benefit of the slow-motion replay, but so close that he gave it the only way he could. It should, however, have been sufficient to remind England that Border alone hits the stumps more regularly than all of their fieldsmen.

That it had passed unheeded was proved when Atherton called Larkins for a single to the same area. Larkins's momentary hesitation was all it took for Border's usual dead-eye throw to beat him by two feet.

This brought together England's two problem players, both of whom have undergone intensive retraining in the nets this week. For a time, it seemed that Smith had responded as well as Atherton, and nothing was more impressive than his restored judgment of what could be left alone outside off stump. One indiscretion sank him, though, an impulsive nibble against a ball of impeccable line from Reid giving Healy another catch.

Gower moved into line to



Out on a limb but still in with a shout: Atherton swings to leg during his unbeaten 94

Coy silence does no service

FROM ALAN LEE

EDDIE Hemmings, a man approaching 42, behaved like a spoiled schoolboy here on Saturday. Worse, he did so in front of the world's leading cricket administrators, who are gathered in Sydney to debate the adoption of an international code of conduct.

Hemmings's ill-mannered reaction to a properly rejected appeal for a bat-pat catch was to kick the ball lustily in the direction of the umpire, Peter McConnell. Luckily for him, it hit the stumps before it could hit the umpire.

It was inexcusably immature behaviour, even allowing for England's perilous position in the third Test match. It provoked booing in the crowd and embarrassment among the English delegates to the meeting of the International Cricket Council in Melbourne this week.

But all it brought from the England team management was a misguided silence.

Micky Stewart, the manager, agreed that it was "unacceptable" for one of his players to show such outward dissent but insisted that any disciplinary action against Hemmings must remain "a private matter" within the dressing-room.

This is the second time in a week that the management has adopted such a stance after a public outburst. Phil Tufnell, who continues to display a worrying capacity for self-destruction, was probably fined for his unedifying clash with McConnell in Melbourne but, for any one knows, he may have escaped any punishment at all. Now Hemmings has been dealt with. Or has he?

Too often, Stewart and the team manager, Peter Lush, pull a cloak of secrecy over the affairs of the team as if resenting the attention they attract. They have failed, in this instance, to grasp the fact that what they may consider a

private matter was in fact a point of public discussion among 26,000 people at the ground and millions more watching television. Their coy refusal to reveal whether Hemmings, and the posturing catcher, Alec Stewart, have been fined leads cynical minds to the conclusion that they have not, which is bad for image and discipline.

Assuming the ICC can overcome its traditional talent for prevarication at this week's meeting, such matters will soon be taken out of the hands of individual managements and made uniformly public. One of the major issues to be ratified at the meeting is the installation of an independent referee at all Test matches to adjudicate on disciplinary matters.

Micky Stewart said last night that he agrees with the proposal and its ramifications. He has an odd way of showing his support.

SWIMMING

Boost for British as Harris and Coombes impress

FROM CRAIG LORD IN PERTH

A NEW era in swimming began last night, when a united Germany and China shared the honours at the 50-metre sprint race on the eve of racing at the sixth world championships at Perth, Australia.

British team spirits were boosted by Lorraine Coombes and Martin Harris, who broke national records in the morning heats and came close to those standards in the finals of the sprints, which were unofficial as far as the championships were concerned and which were not contested by the Americans and some of the British, and even the Australians pulled out of the finals. Swimmers from east and west Germany stood proudly together on the winners' rostrum, symbolising their unity, after dominating the 4 x 50 metres men's and women's relays. Dirk Richter and Thilo Haase took their team's tally of wins to four in the 50 metres backstroke and butterfly respectively. However, but for a warm-up race, the crowd as the Germans walked past, the historic moment passed without fuss.

The warning from China was loud and clear. Qian Hong set the pace with a world best freestyle time of 27.30sec, 0.07sec faster than the time set by Kornelia Greiser in East Berlin in December 1985. Her efforts pulled her teammate, Wang Xiaohong, to second place with 27.70sec.

Qian said she had not expected to swim so fast, but she offered an indication of what the world could expect of China during the next week. Could Chinese women win all their races? "Yes, we can."

She did not wish to comment on the past glories of East Germany, but said she thought the world records at 100 and 200 metres butterfly held by

America's Mary T. McGeary were "unbeatable".

An hour later, Yang Wenyi ensured the Chinese national anthem would be heard again (for only the second time in the first followed Qian's win). Yang, favourite to become the first world champion at 30 metres freestyle this week, looked comfortable when winning the 50 metres backstroke in 29.53sec. It was left to Chen Jianhong to win China's third gold medal, in the 50 metres breaststroke.

Chen said he was pleased despite the fact that "USA and Great Britain were not present". This was a reference to Britain's Adrian Moorhouse, the world record holder at 100 metres breaststroke, who chose, like America, France, Italy and the Netherlands, not to compete in the 50-metre sprint.

The Yorkshireman will try to win the world title at the 100 metres today, and he should be heartened by those British swimmers who did race yesterday. Coombes clocked 29.59sec in the heat of the 50 metres breaststroke. The withdrawal of the Australian team left the Southampton swimmer favourite for the final, but a poor start cost her victory.

Coombes, the oldest member of the British team at 30, was delighted with her second place in 32.77sec, saying it gave her high hopes for the 100 metres title event.

Harris, the 6ft 4in Londoner, chose the heat to break the national record in the 50 metres backstroke. He shaved 0.12sec off Neil Harper's old mark of 29.94sec. The 50 metres butterfly took Leishman back to his youth. He clocked 25.49sec to equal the Scottish record set by his former Aberdeen teammate, Neil Cochran, in 1988.

RESULTS FROM PERTH

Men

Water polo

First round

Group A: Greece beat New Zealand, 14-2; Italy beat Soviet Union, 7-6; Italy beat New Zealand, 18-1; Soviet Union beat Greece, 15-7. Group B: Yugoslavia beat Spain, 8-5; Yugoslavia beat Romania, 14-5; Romania beat China, 13-4; Spain beat China, 21-4. Group C: United States beat France, 10-3; Australia beat United States, 13-10; Australia beat Hungary, 11-4; Australia beat Canada, 13-9. Group D: Hungary beat Cuba, 15-2; Hungary beat Soviet Union, 10-7; Hungary beat USSR, 22-7; Germany beat Hungary, 9-7.

Diving

One metre springboard

FINAL: 1, E. Jongscha (Neth), 586.01pts; 2, M. Lutz (USSR), 578.22; 3, Wang Yany (China), 577.88; 4, P. Späcker (Ger), 567.66; 5, M. Bader (Aust), 544.88; 6, J. Montegron (Mex), 543.05.

Women

Diving

One metre springboard

FINAL: 1, L. Jongscha (Neth), 586.01pts; 2, M. Lutz (USSR), 578.22; 3, Wang Yany (China), 577.88; 4, P. Späcker (Ger), 567.66; 5, M. Bader (Aust), 544.88; 6, J. Montegron (Mex), 543.05.

Water polo

First round

Group A: Netherlands beat Canada, 8-6; Germany beat France, 16-4; Netherlands beat France, 18-5; Canada beat New Zealand, 10-2. Group B: Hungary beat Australia, 10-2; Hungary beat Brazil, 20-2.

Synchronised swimming

Solo preliminaries

Finals: 1, F. Prochaska (Can), 189.88pts; 2, K. Kato (Jpn), 185.94; 3, K. Kato (Jpn), 184.77; 4, O. Sotomayor (Cub), 180.64; 5, K. Schuler (Fry), 187.23; 6, M. E. Gohel (Ind), 174.17; 7, M. Bon (Neth), 170.80; 8, P. Cui (Chn), 177.38. Non-qualifiers: S. M. Norway (GB), 177.38.

Unofficial events

Swimming

Men

50 metres backstroke

FINAL: 1, D. Richter (Ger), 28.44sec; 2, M. Tashkiran (Can), 28.57; 3, V. Shemstov (USSR), 28.67; 4, T. Normenter (Ger), 28.71; 5, M. Harris (GB), 28.91; 6, S. Parry (NZ), 27.18.

50 metres butterfly

FINAL: 1, T. Haase (Ger), 24.58sec; 2, V. Shemstov (USSR), 25.02; 3, M. Lutz (USSR), 25.06; 4, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 25.08; 5, S. Nishimatsu (Jpn), 25.11; 6, V. Kuznetsov (USSR), 25.19. Non-qualifiers: J. Diggins (GB), 25.19.

50 metres breaststroke

FINAL: 1, Chen Jianhong (Chn), 29.53sec; 2, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 29.59; 3, P. Späcker (Ger), 29.74; 4, R. Leishman (GB), 29.76; 5, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 29.77; 6, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 29.78. Non-qualifiers: P. McGeary (USA), 29.78.

4 x 50 metres freestyle relay

FINAL: 1, Germany, 1min 30.88sec; 2, USA, 1:34.25; 3, Norway, 1:34.87; 4, Puerto Rico, 1:36.25; 5, New Zealand, 1:36.28; 6, Indonesia, 1:38.29.

Women

50 metres butterfly

FINAL: 1, Chen Jianhong (Chn), 27.30sec; 2, Wang Xiaohong (Chn), 27.70; 3, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 27.71; 4, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 27.72; 5, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 27.73; 6, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 27.74. Non-qualifiers: J. Diggins (GB), 27.75.

50 metres backstroke

FINAL: 1, L. Jongscha (Neth), 28.55sec; 2, L. Coombes (GB), 28.77; 3, K. Duggan (GB), 28.81; 4, A. Jandjandj (Chn), 28.82; 5, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 28.83; 6, S. Jandjandj (Chn), 28.84. Non-qualifiers: J. Diggins (GB), 28.85.

4 x 50 metres freestyle relay

FINAL: 1, Germany, 1min 30.88sec; 2, USA, 1:34.25; 3, Norway, 1:34.87; 4, Puerto Rico, 1:36.25; 5, New Zealand, 1:36.28; 6, Indonesia, 1:38.29.

MOTOR SPORT

Ickx regains lead after a rocky stage

PARIS (Agencies) — Jacky Ickx, of Belgium, recaptured the lead from his Citroen team colleague, Ari Vatanen, of Finland, on the fourth stage of the Paris to Dakar rally between Ghat and Tumu, in Libya at the weekend. Ickx finished ahead of Vatanen, some 16 minutes behind Hubert Auriol, of France, in a Lada, in the 681km stage, as other competitors struggled to find their way through the rocky southern Libyan desert.

Vatanen, three times a winner of the event, was half an hour behind Auriol, and is trailing Ickx by 6min 25sec in the provisional overall standings.

Pierre Lartigue, of France, in a Mitsubishi, is third.

Auriol, who lost valuable time because of engine trouble over the first two Libyan stages, nearly missed the finishing line in Tumu, on the border with Niger, and had to make a U-turn to cross it properly.

Thierry Magnaldi, of France, on a Yamaha, held on to his slight lead in the motorcycle section with a seventh place.

Dick Partridge and Keith Parker, the only British car entry, took 21st and 44th places over the stage in the Lada, and they had barely three hours to rest before the start of the 601km stage to Dirkou in Niger.

SKIING

Germans infiltrating to top

FROM BRIAN JAMES IN GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN

THE Kandahar, among the grandest of skiing's downhill tracks, has returned to the world of winter sport with the reminder that only the soundest of brave men can expect to unravel its icy secrets.

Yesterday, Günther Mader, a 26-year-old Austrian who has been picking up World Cup points with hard-earned persistence since 1983 and made himself a specialist in the Johnny-come-lately discipline of super-giant slalom, won with two other men who have done it all, Franz Heinzer and Marc Girardelli, figuratively at his elbow.

But a sense of anti-climax could not be overcome. This super-giant, run on a shortened Kandahar with more gates and flattened bumps, was like running a reprimand of the Grand National next day, leaving out Bechers, the Canal Turn and the Chair. Worse, it had to follow a truly classic Kandahar downhill.

A German victory on Garmisch's return after three abandoned years would have been a sublimity. And for eight minutes the German ski coach, Martin Oswald, could cling to the dream that he was to become a national hero for driving his men out in the sort of weather you should not wish on your enemy's dog. Wisely, long

without a top-ranked skier, had Hannes Zehentner leading the come-back to the world of winter sport with the reminder that only the soundest of brave men can expect to unravel its icy secrets.

The altered course threw men into turns and jumps that had television producers yelling aloud with joy and the media mentally stockpiling their bandages. It connected a finish with the next six men after Mader tied in pairs for places, with just 0.1sec covering all seven. Some television men said it was even closer than that: the timing was faulty, for, after examining their film frame by frame, they made the Norwegian, Aile Skarvald (officially second with the same time as Zehentner) the fastest.

But Oswald insists that Germany's time is right: that in the year his nation was reunited, it also took the steps to conquer the world of ski racing. His evidence is impressive. Who for we have been lost in fascination over the infiltration of Norwegians into the top echelon (five

more top-10 places in the Garmisch races), we have been blinded to the quiet trend of two or three Germans into the top scoring places in every big race so far.

Nor is it upon Wasmeier, who has won a single downhill in nine years, slugging, nor Tauscher, who makes a wild choice of ski to win a freestyle world championship title and nothing before or since, on whom Germany depends: Oswald changed both style and method of training this season. "They used to sit around and lament when the weather was bad. Skiers who hated cold and wind! We changed this. Now we get out and practise harder than ever when weather is bad."

The other Oswald change has been to take the best technical racers he can find and make them concentrate on speed. "We used to do most work on technique. Now all training is competitive: it is you against the clock, but also you against the other guys in the team. Beating the man you had breakfast with is taken very seriously." Fiala, one of his squad, said. This idea — getting clever skiers and then stretching to make them remain clever at speed, rather than finding madcaps and hoping you can teach them to stop somersaulting into the trees — is also how Norway goes about it.

Oswald's claim to have five young men capable of winning was underlined when 21-year-old Berni Huber ran two-thirds of the course in second-best time before a late mistake dropped him to sixth.

Boris Duncan, of Britain, who had lost a ski at the start of his one practice run, and so went on to the piste "blind", survived though four seconds down. Both Bell brothers, skiing too aggressively, skidded out.

Kronberger's slip to profit of Gutensohn

FROM BRIAN JAMES IN GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN

BAD Kleinkirchheim (Reuter) — Katrin Gutensohn, of Germany, won a women's World Cup downhill yesterday after the Austrian favourite, Petra Kronberger, back after injury, slipped on an icy section of the course and lost time. She finished thirteenth.

The Austria-born Gutensohn shot down the 2,670-metre Strohsbach course in 1min 36.03sec for her seventh World Cup downhill win. Sabine Günther, of Austria, who replaced the injured Sigrid Wolf among the top starters, upstaged the more fancied skiers to finish second.

RESULTS: 1, K. Gutensohn (Ger), 1min 36.03sec; 2, S. Günther (Aust), 1:36.32; 3, C. Bounie (Swe), 1:36.52; 4, K. Lutz (Ger), 1:36.76; 5, V. Zelenyánska (USSR), 1:36.81; 6, M. Gern (Ger), 1:36.82; 7, C. Marnett (Fry), 1:36.82; 8, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.13; 9, K. Kronberger (Ger) and V. K. (Aust), 1:37.19. Non-qualifiers: 10, M. K. (Aust), 1:37.19; 11, P. Kronberger (Aust), 1:37.19; 12, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 13, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 14, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 15, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 16, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 17, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 18, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 19, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 20, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 21, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 22, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 23, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 24, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 25, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 26, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 27, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 28, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 29, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 30, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 31, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 32, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 33, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 34, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 35, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 36, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 37, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 38, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 39, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 40, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 41, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 42, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 43, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 44, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 45, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 46, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 47, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 48, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 49, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 50, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 51, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 52, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 53, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 54, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 55, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 56, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 57, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 58, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 59, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 60, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 61, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 62, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 63, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 64, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 65, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 66, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 67, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 68, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 69, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 70, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 71, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 72, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 73, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 74, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 75, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 76, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 77, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 78, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 79, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 80, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 81, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 82, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 83, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 84, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 85, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 86, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 87, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 88, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 89, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 90, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 91, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 92, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 93, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 94, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 95, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 96, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 97, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 98, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 99, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 100, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 101, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 102, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 103, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 104, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 105, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 106, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 107, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 108, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 109, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 110, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 111, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 112, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 113, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 114, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 115, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 116, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:37.19; 117, S. B. B. (Fry), 1:

